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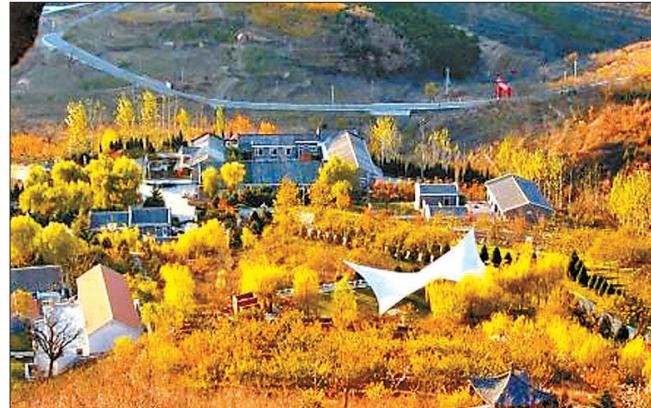
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北京青年报
BEIJING YOUTH DAILY



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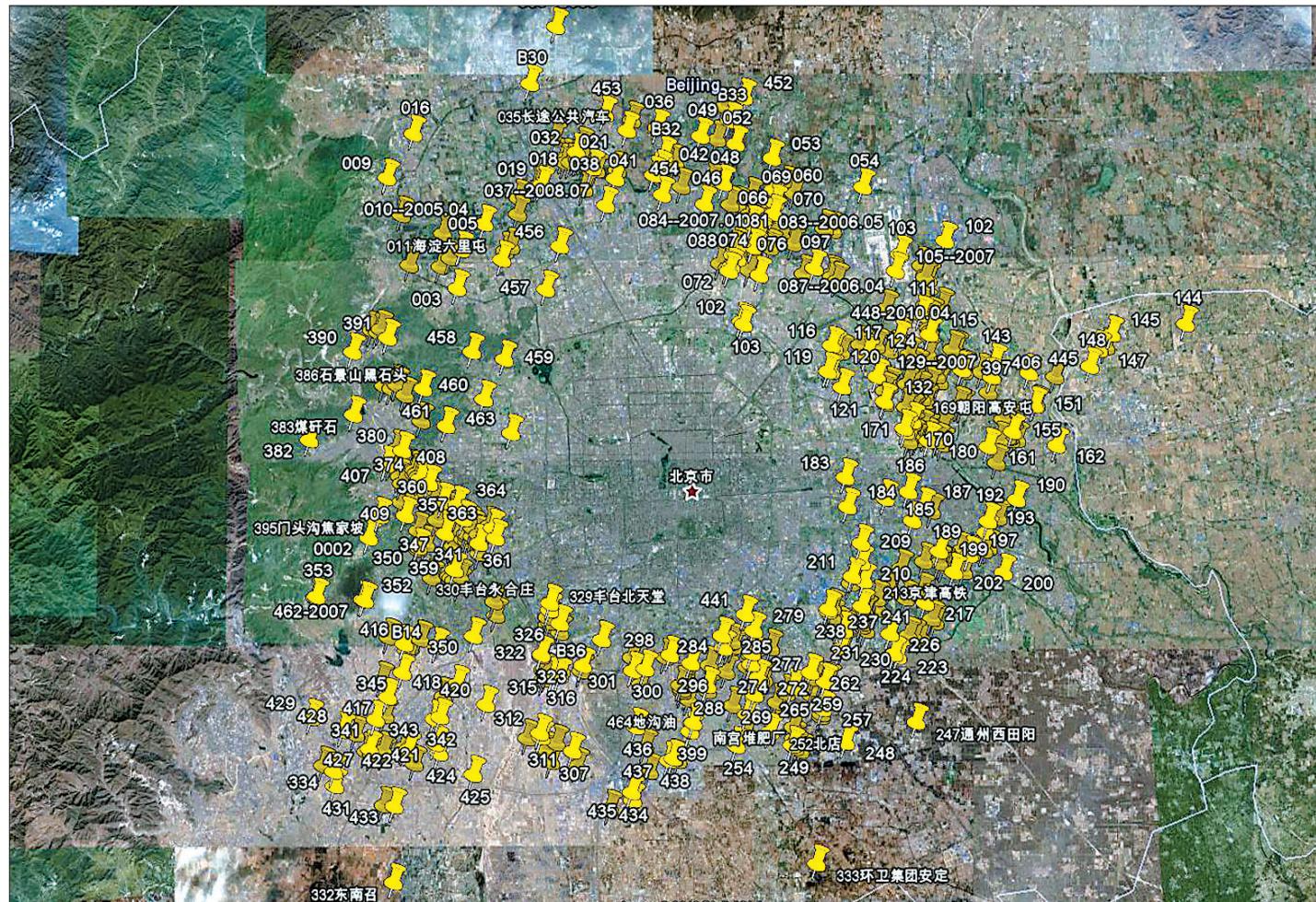
Come see what the 13 villages nominated as the capital's most beautiful have to offer.



Page 8 Seeking water for Sichuan

The American Red Cross is still working hard to restore water access to families in the quake zones.

A city besieged by waste



Beijing first target in gov's dioxin battle

By Zhao Hongyi

The central government is intending to tackle dioxin emissions across the country and Beijing is one of the first targets.

The Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei area, Yangtze River Delta and Pearl River Delta will be the pilot sites for a new system that will index and punish companies based on their emission of dioxins into the environment, said Ding Qiong, head of the Ministry of Environmental Protection's international cooperation department.

Ding said the ministry aims to slash dioxin emissions nationwide by 10 percent during the next five years. Its new rules and regulations on emissions control are being drafted.

"We expect to have something concrete published by the end of the year," Ding said.

Dioxins are primarily produced by the incineration of industrial waste in iron, steel and mining mills. Street garbage from Beijing and Shanghai is a heavy secondary source.

Decomposing dioxin is easy and safe as long as the smoke from the fires is not allowed to escape into the atmosphere, Lu Zhanqiang, an engineer at the newly built Gaobeidian Garbage Disposal Station, said.

Last month, the new Lujiashan Disposal Center began its use as western Beijing's newest waste incinerator and power generator.

Previously, the capital buried most of its garbage.

In 2009 alone, the capital produced 6.69 million tons of waste. Waste output is increasing 8 percent each year.

Conservative estimates say the capital's landfills will be full within four years.

"We're surrounded by garbage," Nie Yongfeng, a professor of environmental engineering from Tsinghua University, said.

The municipal government began building incinerators several years ago, but many residents worry about the safety of living near such plants.

Prior to October, only the Gao'antun Garbage Firing and Disposing Center in the east was in use. Asuwei Center in the north was still being evaluated for its environmental impact; Nangong Center in the south is still seeking bids for construction; Liulitun Center in the west has yet to select a site.

The Lujiashan Center is by contrast a small-scale project.

The new government campaign against dioxins brings these centers under even greater scrutiny.

"These garbage processing centers will not harm local residents," said Wang Weiping, deputy engineer general at the Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau.

The incinerators make use of the latest technology to ensure disposal takes place in an isolated environment and no smoke is allowed to escape, Wang said.

"We just hope residents will start sorting their trash before throwing it out," he said.

Ministry says blood bank back to normal



Officials say the blood shortage in several cities is over.

CFP Photo

By Li Zhixin

Ministry of Health spokesman Deng Haihua said at a news conference Tuesday that the blood shortage that halted surgeries in several cities was over.

He also denied reports that hospitals have been charging for clinical blood.

At the end of last month, blood centers in Beijing, Nanjing, Wuhan, Chongqing, Changchun, Qingdao, Kunming and Hefei all reported a shortage of blood for clinical use. Media coverage of the shortage called into question the country's current system of blood collection.

Emergency appeals by TV and text messaging, as well as mass mobilization of bloodmobiles to campuses and offices to collect donations, rapidly refilled supplies.

The Beijing Municipal Blood Center had more than 9,000 units (200 milliliters per unit) of blood, bringing it close to its daily operation budget of 10,000 to 12,000 units.

The price charged by hospitals for clinical blood was a charge to offset the cost of collection, inspection, storage and distribution, the spokesman said.

(Xinhua)

man said. The price was set by the National Development and Reform Committee.

Although demand for clinical blood is increasing yearly, the spokesman said the media exaggerated the shortfall. "The blood center is just like a reservoir; blood constantly flows out of it. Ups and downs in the amount stored are normal."

However, he admitted that there would not be as many regular donors without the payment scheme established in 1998. "When the blood budget runs lower than normal, the centers have to rush to recruit more temporary donors," he said.

He said the government is still campaigning to educate people about procedural safety and push public servants and medical workers to be donation role models.

The Beijing Municipal Bureau of Health called on hospitals to use "transfusion-free surgery" to conserve blood use during shortages. This procedure, used often abroad, requires people with planned surgeries to bank their own blood in advance of the operation.

Corruption closes liaison offices

The central government closed 625 of the 971 local government liaison offices in Beijing after widespread accusations of bribery and waste.

According to a detailed list the State Council released Tuesday, the offices shut down include eight that represented major cities, 189 that represented local government departments at various levels, 374 that represented counties and 54 that represented development zones and other government units.

On January 19, the General Office of the State Council issued a circular urging a reduction in the number of local government liaison offices in the capital.

The circular also called for stricter supervision of the offices to cut costs and fight corruption.

"After the State Council circular, many local governments set up spe-

cial teams to investigate their liaison offices and map out plans to regulate them," said an unnamed official from the Government Offices Administration of the State Council.

"Applications to keep the offices open were strictly reviewed. The offices whose management was disorderly or unclear were eliminated, as were the ones that did not function satisfactorily," the official said.

Some 296 offices representing major cities and all 50 offices that represent China's provinces and special economic zones were permitted to keep offices in the capital.

Liaison offices usually have assets that include apartments, guest houses, hotels and restaurants.

Calling the move "finished on the whole," the official also noted some problems following the shutdown.

"Some office workers haven't been transferred back yet ... and the property of some offices was not settled properly. We will help the relevant government departments with follow-up management work," the official said.

The official said local government departments were forbidden to set up new offices in other forms.

The January circular clarified the major functions of those retained liaison offices, saying that they should offer "high-quality, frugal and efficient" services for the economic and social development of their localities.

To enhance supervision, local governments have been asked to audit their liaison offices each year; the Government Offices Administration will conduct random checks of the audits, the official said.

(Xinhua)

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Top bike rental firm goes bust

By Han Manman

Fortune, the city's largest bike renter, closed this week, selling its entire fleet of bicycles for as low as 20 to 50 yuan each.

As of Wednesday, most of the orange-colored bicycles bearing the Fortune Bicycle-Lending logo had been sold by a rental outlet near the China National Library. A nearby newsstand operator said the company had been selling the bikes since October.

The death of Fortune came as a surprise to many users, but insiders said the company experienced a long, painful death.

"The company is over. It stopped operating two months ago," said Li Xiangyang, the former managing assistant.

Like many bike rental agencies, it failed to profit almost since its inception, losing 10 million yuan in two years, Li said.

Founded in May 2007 with an investment of 2 million yuan, Fortune at its peak operated 200 outlets throughout the capital.

But the startup began hemorrhaging money in its third month.

Even a second cash injection in January 2008 was not enough to keep Fortune afloat.

The company's model allowed renters, for a 180-yuan deposit, to borrow bikes for 1 yuan per half hour. A payment of 30 yuan allowed them to borrow a bike for the whole month.

Li said the business showed promise for its first three months. However, things quickly deteriorated.

When the government slashed bus fares, the bicycle rental industry had to follow suit to stay competitive.

"But the biggest problem wasn't the money," Li said. "We were getting no supportive policies from the government."



Lack of government support has put most of the city's private bike rental companies out of business.

Photo by James Wang

Li said the company could have made a profit had it been allowed to sell advertisements. "Advertisements could have been posted on the bike frames, in parking sheds and similar places. That might have brought in more money," he said.

The government did not allow the company to pursue this business model.

"Without any support, we just suffered more and more losses," Li said. "When investors saw no hope of a profit they stopped giving us money."

Fortune is one of many bicycle rental companies to die during

the last two years. Bike Rental, another Beijing rental company, is thought to be facing severe financial difficulty and could be the next casualty.

But some bicycle rental companies remain confident about the future.

Spokespersons for Lantu Suobei and Yongjiu, two other bike rental companies, said Fortune's closing will not influence their operations.

"We still believe the bicycle rental business has good prospects," said Li Cangtian, a Yongjiu representative.



Fortune Bicycle-Lending closed after three years of losses.

Photo provided by Beijing Youth Daily

He said the government has been taking a more active interest in the rental industry since the start of the year.

Beijing public transportation officials issued a plan in August to make public bikes available

for lending near subway lines by the end of this year. It would be the government's first public bike-lending service.

"We may see new opportunities for development next year," he said.

Study says inferiority, jealousy drive migrant worker crime

By Liang Meilan

The intermediate court of Yangzhou recently published a report about its investigation of crimes by young migrant workers that links the growing rate to widespread disappointment with society.

As many as 60 percent of the country's 15 million migrant workers were born in the 1980s and 1990s. Most received relatively higher education than their fathers and expected to have high-level jobs in cities.

"But the facts are different. They enter the job market shortly after finishing middle or high school, and the only options open to them are on construction sites or in the service industry," the report reads.

Because few have experience with farm labor, most enter the job sites unprepared for the strenuous activity involved in construction.

"They come totally unprepared for this kind of tough work in the



Second-generation migrant workers are drawn to a fashionable city life—even if their paychecks are unable to support one.

CFP Photo

big city, but they stay because they are attracted to the colorful city lifestyle," said Li Jianjun, a criminological analyst at Beijing Hairun Law Firm.

Another reason they may be reluctant to return home is because of a loss of rural identity. Li said many of them have lost the accents

and habits of the people in their hometowns.

"They may look like urban residents, but their social status and living conditions are far lower," he said. Unable to find a place in either the city or countryside, many in the group struggle to forge their own identity.

The report said many young migrant workers suffer from an inferiority complex and jealousy.

"The situation is that they see the high-consumption and high-entertainment city life as normal. But their incomes don't support this. It's easy for them to resort to illegal ways to get money, and that is why theft and robbery make up such a big chunk of migrant worker crimes," the report says.

Li studied theft and robbery in Haidian District in 2008 and found that of 719 suspects who were arrested on suspicion of these crimes, 306 were migrant workers between the ages of 14 and 24.

"Most were unwilling to retreat back home or to smaller towns and villages even though they couldn't make ends meet in the capital," he said.

A greater worry is that as migrant workers tend to stick together in the city, these acts of desperation could spread into gang

crime, he said.

Shi Yongcai, president of the intermediate court of Yangzhou, said there needs to be a greater focus on providing psychological support to young migrant workers. "We need to strengthen their sense of belonging and help them find an identity in the city," he said.

He suggested granting hukou to young migrant workers whose skills and discipline have made them group models in hopes that other migrant workers will emulate their success.

Zhu Lijia, head of teaching and research at the Chinese Academy of Governance, said that the best way to stop large-scale crime is to ensure migrant workers are given the right to basic education.

"Since higher education is a major way that migrant workers win social acceptance, we should focus on helping them continue their education to open the doors to better jobs," he said.

The dark side of Web PR

Underground army buffs, smears reputations

By Huang Daohen

College students, hardcore gamers and the occasional pencil-pushing troll all have one thing in common: their ranks make up China's now millions-strong *shuijun*.

Unlike many self-fashioned cyber warriors, the "water army" is very much in it for the money. Their Internet personas are hired by PR agencies for a pittance to bump and bury negative posts, and occasionally to facilitate bribes that result in the deletion of negative news items from a portal.



China has almost 400 million Internet users, making Web marketing a big business.



Xu Zhuohen/IC Photo

Invisible hands online

Like many in this country of 400 million Internet users, Yang Mingxian spends his day surfing the Web and writing articles online.

But for the 26-year-old Beijing blogger, that's his job.

Yang, an online marketer for a local Internet PR agency, graduated from Wuhan University in 2007 with a degree in Chinese. His first job was as a tour guide for a local tourism company in Hubei Province.

"I wanted to do something more exciting," Yang said. He quickly found his current job and came to Beijing last July. "That's where I learned the business of Internet manipulation," he said.

Though the company Yang worked for is a PR agency, it is registered as an advertising agency with about 20 employees.

For the first three months, Yang's job was 8 hours a day of blogging.

"I used to post on popular online forums when I was in school, so I knew what kind of articles and titles would attract attention," Yang said.

Within half a year, Yang was promoted to online marketing director. When not writing articles, Yang had a second job: finding and managing paid posters.

"We call them *shuijun*, which means water army in English," Yang said. The name is a play on the ability of a torrent of posts to bump or bury digital information.

Yang's army consists of college students and jobless people, as well as a few office workers and video-game addicts who moonlight as hired trolls. Through them, the firm operates 3 million user accounts on social media such as bulletin board systems (BBSes), social networking sites (SNS) and 14,000 QQ groups.

When a client taps the might of an army, Yang puts word out over chat groups and QQ. Using fake IDs, they post comments and articles online that bump information the client wants prominent and bury that which it wants to hide. Each post earns between 0.3 and 0.5 yuan, though posts which include pictures are paid more.

Arguable underground business

Manipulating a company's image is only the tip of the iceberg. Yang said many Internet PR companies take on smear campaigns and charge amazing fees to get negative news "deleted."

Usually billed as self-styled PR "crisis managers," these

"Deleting news articles is difficult, but deleting posts from online forums is very common and easy these days."

companies can be easily found using QQ groups. An online search shows that currently more than six million public relations agencies operate through the Internet, and their market value is estimated at more than 1 billion yuan.

In a recent highly publicized incident, dairy giant Mengniu contracted an Internet PR agency to carry out a smear campaign against its rival Yili, Xinhua reported.

In the end, the campaign only served to further rattle consumer confidence in the entire dairy industry.

Deletion attempts and public attacks are the more profitable side of the business, Yang said. Getting false information onto the first page of Tianya, a popular online forum, or getting negative

ones deleted may cost 2,500 yuan per post. Less popular forums cost 1,000 yuan per post.

Yang said getting information deleted is surprisingly trivial. "Deleting news articles is difficult, but deleting posts from online forums is very common and easy these days."

The firm merely bribes an editor at the forum or website to kill the posts.

Editors and moderators are normally given this power to monitor and moderate the thousands of posts and comments that appear each day. What merits deletion is generally left entirely unto their discretion.

Yang said what is more troubling is the placement of fake articles by PR agencies.

"It undermines consumer trust in the Web," Yang said. "I'm against smear campaigns and deleting posts, but I think paid postings are just fine – as long as they stay legal."

Yang blogs often about his work at the PR firm. "I want people to be aware of how Internet manipulation works so they can recognize these aggressive attempts to stir controversy."

Gray area in law

Although ethically bankrupt, there is no law prohibiting this manipulation. Chen Xiangyang, a senior officer with the China

International PR Association, said the problem is that proof of such activity is notoriously hard to come by.

PR firms and websites are private companies and generally sign contracts with their clients. "But no one would list deleting posts or smearing competitors in the terms of a contract. It all comes under the umbrella of 'advertising.'

Chen said the whole industry has to change to fix this.

"Many companies see the PR industry as an easy alternative to actually fixing the problems that attract negative publicity," Chen said. "That sucks."

But deleting negative posts and news in a forum is hardly a substitute for managing a crisis, Chen said. "On the contrary, the cover-up causes even more trouble in the future."

Yang said requiring people to post under their real names would be one way to eliminate such operations. But that system would end the anonymity that many netizens value.

Chen said an all-round effort is needed to fix Internet manipulation. "The government needs to do a better job monitoring these companies, PR firms need to clean up their acts and customers should be on the alert," he said.

World's biggest headcount

Population census to reveal some of China's secrets

Counting how many people live in the most populous nation on Earth seems like mission impossible, but on November 1, more than 6 million census workers went door-to-door to document the country's demographic changes.

China kicked off its once-a-decade census last Monday, a whirlwind 10-day head count that saw 6 million census takers scrutinize apartment blocks, scour migrant areas and scan rural villages to document massive demographic changes in the world's most populous country.

The 2000 tally put the country's official population at 1.295 billion people, but missed migrant workers living in cities for less than six months. In the 10 years since, there has been an extensive shift in the population base as tens of millions of migrant workers have poured into urban areas looking for work.

"Wherever you are living from November 1 to November 10, you will be counted," said Zhang Xueyuan, director of the publicity for the Beijing census committee.

It is the sixth time China has carried out a national census, but the first time it will count people where they live and not where their residence certificate, or hukou, is legally registered. The change will better track the demographic changes and find the true size of giant cities, the populations of which up to now have been only estimates.

The nation has gone to great lengths to promote the census this year. In Beijing, giant, colorful banners flying across neighborhood gates have slogans such as: "The census is for the nation and each citizen," and "Everyone participates in the census."

Unlike the US census, where residents are asked to fill out and mail in forms, Chinese census-takers plan to speed up the process by going door-to-door asking people questions about their education level, family history, employment situation and resident status.

"How many years have you lived here? How many people live here? Where do your children live? How old are they? How long have you been retired?"

Every census-taker covers about 80 to 100 households, where about 90 percent will have to answer 18 questions about home ownership, jobs and family members, said Cai Jun, an official with the Beijing census committee.

This is the first year foreigners, as well as people from Hong Kong and Macau, will be counted, said Cai. They will be required to answer only eight questions.

The main data gathered during the census is to be released at the end of April.

(Associated Press)



Foreigners and those from Hong Kong and Macau living on the Chinese mainland were counted in this year's census.

Zhang Liwei/IC Photo

Sidelight

Census-taker tells her story

Two out of 10 ain't bad, at least according to Chen Yi, a census-taker in a Shanghai international community.

"With a bit of luck, we should get good results as most people are home from work now," Chen said.

At about 5:30 pm Chen set off to knock on doors, armed with an official badge, a heavy bag of census forms and introduction letters, and accompanied by Swiss volunteer Milena Muntwyler.

Time is of the essence, Chen explained. "We have to finish by 9 pm so as not to interrupt residents' rest."

The first 10 visits didn't yield much. No one answered the door at seven homes, one refused to open the door and, in the end,

only two residents completed the form.

However, this is not particularly bad, said Chen, who has become accustomed to similar results since she began visiting households during preparatory work in September.

When Chen and her fellow census workers are not pounding the sidewalks visiting neighborhoods in the evening and early morning, they are kept busy with administration. They've also worked weekends for the past month, surviving on take-out food most of the time.

Often Chen encounters suspicion. "Many people look at me through the peephole on their front door or turn off the light, pretend-

ing nobody's at home," she said.

Chen will not harangue. Instead, she leaves an introductory letter explaining that it's the national census conducted every 10 years.

"Perhaps they are children or seniors who don't want to open the door to strangers. I will come again when someone else is home," she said.

Even though she has been a community worker for several years, Chen does not know every resident, as the international community has a transient population.

Chen's task is made more difficult by some expats' insistence on privacy — she has visited some households more than 10 times.

"After calling several times

they are willing to talk to me, asking, 'Who are you?' If I go again, they may be willing to chat more, saying, 'What are you doing? Why are you doing this?' In the end, they finally open the door," she said.

Though she speaks good English, Chen invited community resident Muntwyler to help convince reluctant residents.

"I'm very glad to be part of the census," said Muntwyler, 58, a housewife who is interested in community work. "It's very interesting to meet so many people."

Muntwyler said she has become "famous" since helping the census workers, as many residents now say "Hello."

(Agencies)

The third eye

Census to help companies better market in China

By Huang Daohen

Census data and population tendency are not only important for government policymakers, but also essential for companies who produce daily necessities.

Though the main data from this census is to be released next April, investors from home and abroad are already gleaning insights from the census and preparing to put data to good use for their future development.

Labor costs in China are the main concern for multinational companies as population growth in some major cities declined. A

recent World Bank report said that China is adding about 6.5 million new people annually, which is a very small number considering the country's population, estimated to be more than 1.3 billion.

The report also said the number of Chinese women of childbearing age, from 15 to 49 years old, reached its peak in 2008.

"If the census confirms the World Bank's expectations, that will mean fewer young people and more elders in the future," said Cecilia Shi, account manager at the PR agency Burson Marsteller.

"While young people have to

support their families, the cost of the workforce will increase and companies will reconsider whether China is still the cheapest site for manufacture," Shi said.

In recent years, some multinational companies have relocated their manufacturing bases to developing countries like Vietnam out of concern for labor cost.

Shi said this trend will become a serious problem over the coming decade, and company policy makers should be highly concerned.

Another phenomenon the census should uncover is the migra-

tion of farmers. Previous official figures show that about 13 million farmers move to cities every year. Nevertheless, big cities like Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou are not their favorite destination due to high living costs. Second-tier cities and smaller ones in the interior, like Zhengzhou in Henan Province, are more preferable locations.

"If the census has details on such regional differences, it will be interesting and useful for anyone doing business in China," Shi said.

The results could help change how global companies market in China, she said.

Diesel crisis

Country suffers diesel shortage during power cut



Truck drivers parked for hours to buy rationed diesel Monday.

Li Zhenyu/IC Photo

Truck drivers lined up for hours to buy rationed diesel this week during a shortage in the south. Media reports say power outages imposed on factories to help cities meet their energy efficiency targets are to blame, but experts disagree.

A new wave of diesel shortages has swept across the country. However, in contrast to previous shortages, this time it seems that energy restrictions forced on high-polluting and energy-intensive industries across various provinces over the latter half of this year are directly to blame.

A source at Sinopec said that "all industries that need electricity in order to maintain production need to do is buy a diesel generator."

A report from the Commercial Petroleum Flow Committee of China revealed that 2,000 private gas stations in the south closed due to diesel shortage.

In Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Hunan and other provinces, many stations put limits on how much each individual customer could purchase.

Sinopec said the biggest difference from the previous diesel shortages is that this time the shortage is not being caused by a lack of diesel production or by high crude prices.

This time, many industries are turning to diesel generators to power their production.

According to in-house research by Sinopec, orders and sales of diesel generators produced by a few leading manufacturers rocketed 200 percent in October when compared to the figures for September.

According to energy effi-

ciency targets set in the 11th Five-year Plan, the country is supposed to become 20 percent more energy efficient over the next five years.

To meet this target, local areas have come under pressure from the central government to reduce emissions and cut energy use.

Starting from September, Guangxi, Guangdong, Jiangsu, Zhejiang and other areas introduced measures that forced power restrictions on certain industries.

UBS also published a report that forecast that demand for refined oil imports may suddenly rise, leading to a short-term jump in international oil prices.

An official at the National Development and Reform Commission said this latest diesel shortage will only be temporary and limited to certain areas of the country. Currently refined oil production is in excess of demand and a shortage of crude oil will not occur, he said.

Up until August, diesel production at both PetroChina and Sinopec exceeded demand.

From January to June, China exports of diesel climbed to 2.62 million tons, up 22 percent over the same period last year. In contrast, during the first half of this year, diesel imports dropped to 764,000 tons, down by nearly 27 percent when compared to a year earlier.

(Agencies)

Shanghai gets deal for Disney park

Just days after Shanghai wrapped up its role as host to the World Expo, the commercial hub is setting its sights on another big tourism draw: a long-awaited Disney theme park.

Walt Disney and the city government agreed on November 5 to plans for a joint venture to manage the project. The theme park would use 20 percent of the land area in the 2,000-hectare resort, the city government said Friday in a statement.

The cost is estimated at 25 billion yuan (\$3.6 billion).

Plans call for the theme park to be a "strong international tourism resort," with a pleasant, low-carbon environment, the city said. A joint venture between local companies and Disney will be responsible for construction, management and operation of the Disneyland theme park, it said without giving any details about ownership or investment.

Some residents were long ago moved off farmland in Chuansha, a part of Pudong district near the city's main international airport, to make way for the park.

Disney issued a statement confirming its discussions with the Shanghai government.

"We can confirm the statement from the Shanghai government that we have taken another step forward in the approval process," it said.

But the company said it was still awaiting final approval of the joint venture by the central government and completion of necessary procedures.

"We will not have any further comment at this time," it said.

The six-month-long World Expo drew a record 72 million visitors. That event was the culmination of a construction frenzy that gave the city of more than 20 million nearly a dozen new subway lines, new highways, airport upgrades and other modern facilities.

With the Disneyland project due to start, the city appears likely to resume its building boom.

The agreement last Friday came exactly a year after the country's national planning agency approved the plans for the park — a major step toward getting the project started.

The park will give Shanghai, the mainland's main financial and commercial center, a new showcase. While the city is one of China's most modern and affluent, it has relatively few big historic landmarks compared with ancient capitals like Beijing and Xi'an.

Disney said the Shanghai resort will include a "Magic Kingdom-style theme park with characteristics tailored to the Shanghai region."

Disney has been expanding its presence on the mainland since opening a theme park in Hong Kong in 2005. That venue, which has suffered from disappointing attendance, is in the midst of an expansion as it maneuvers to compete with the future theme park in Shanghai. (Agencies)

Guangdong free-ride plan cancelled

By Huang Daochen

The Guangzhou municipal government, host of the 2010 Asian Games, announced on Monday that it has cancelled the free-ride plan, a week after its launch. Instead, the city will provide transportation subsidies.

Earlier this month, the government said it would make public transportation free during the month-long Games, which start today. The plan was intended to ease the city's traffic congestion.

According to the plan, all Guangzhou residents and visitors were entitled to free subway, bus and water transportation services. The city also planned to take half of its 2.1 million private vehicles off the road, based on whether their license plates ended with an odd or even number.

The plan was met with unprecedented enthusiasm. According to a Xinhua report, the subway system saw a historic passenger inflow on the first day, as more than 6 million people chose to take the free ride. The average daily passenger flow during the past week was about 7.8 million, 3 million more than normal.

For days, the subway stations in Guangzhou were crammed with people, the report said.

This prompted worries about security and public safety. As a result, the Guangzhou government called off the plan, and as a replacement will offer each household a 150-yuan subsidy for transportation.

The Asian Games will feature some 11,700 athletes competing in 42 sports. The event is taking lessons from Beijing and Shanghai, which respectively hosted the 2008 Olympics and this year's World Expo, but how to ease traffic during big events is still a problem plaguing the organizing committee.



Passengers crowd a subway station on November 1, the first day for first free public transportation in Guangzhou.

Biby Chan/IC Photo

Comment

Too many people

When I read the news that Guangzhou was planning to offer free rides, it was easy to predict that such a disaster would happen. The government might do it with good intentions, but the problem is China has too many people and lots of people like to take mass transit.

In my hometown back in Ireland, the government tried to offer free transportation on a permanent basis, and all it

did was provide enough buses.

— Justin, consultant

Apologize to citizens

It's a good decision to cancel the former plan, but the city government should say sorry to its citizens for the inconsiderate policy. Somebody might have goofed up. They should have foreseen that handing out free tickets was going to swamp the system.

Will someone from the decision-making committee come out and face the people

on this issue? A sincere apology would show the government's competence.

— Chen Jun, bank accountant

Work details on subsidy plan

The government must work more on the details of the subsidy plan. For the free-ride policy and subsidy to reduce traffic jams during the Asian Games, the government needs to find a way to guarantee the money handed out is used

for taking public transportation and not for buying fuel for private cars.

— John Xiao, editor

Gov deserves commendation

Although the Guangzhou municipal government made frequent changes in its traffic policy, they still deserve praise because they tried something bold and corrected their error when they became aware of it.

— Cindy Lee, dancer

Should we prevent our kids from entertainment TV programs?

By Zhao Hongyi

"From Sunday to Thursday, when there are school lessons, parents should prevent children from watching TV, especially the entertainment programs on Hunan Satellite TV. If you insist, we recommend watching CCTV-2, CCTV-10 and CCTV-9."

Such was the warning from a Nanjing middle school at a par-

ent-teacher meeting last week. The purpose was to ask parents to prevent kids from watching entertainment programs, whereby they might be exposed to indecency and dirty words.

The school also suggested preventing students from holding birthday parties with classmates and using mobile phones or MP3 and MP4 players.

A survey by *China Youth Daily*

showed that entertainment TV programs might be sending the wrong message about success and morality, and that children might be negatively affected.

"These programs are hurting our young generation, distorting the right-life principles and definition of success," said Huang Hongji, professor at College of Law and Politics from Shanghai Normal University.

"We're in an age of entertainment," said Sun Xiaoyun, editor-in-chief of the magazine *Children's Study*. "These programs package real-life issues as entertainment, which is making our youth become shallow and influencing the future development and sustainability of our country."

But many parents and adults say the school is taking the

issue too seriously. A parent survey showed that more than half of respondents said they wouldn't prevent their children from watching entertainment programs, compared to 30.3 percent who said they would.

"Kids should have their entertainment programs, but the problem is our entertainment programs are negatively affecting them," Sun said.

Comment

Negative impact getting worse

These TV programs are too vulgar! They have no content and aren't informative. There's only slapping, tickling and flirting, illustrating the wrong path in life. More seriously, many kids are attracted by the lack of morality, interest and willingness to study and work. I'm really worried about the

future of our country.

— Zhang Jianhong, commentator

Responsibility falls upon the kids

I agree that most entertainment programs are not suitable to kids, but that doesn't mean we should condemn them. TV channels have to survive in the market. Instead, we should ask TV channels to provide educational programs for our

kids. Many CCTV programs are informative; it's up to the kids and their parents to watch.

— Sima Tong, commentator

Kids should have more options

Kids in China basically only study and watch TV. Their options for leisure are limited. They should have more outdoor sports, skills training and other useful and healthy activities to participate in.

entertainment industry.

— Andreas Landwehr, journalist, Beijing

We need more programs to choose from

The key problem here is that we don't have enough variety in TV programming. I'm sure lots of kids would choose educational programs if there were more of them.

— Yang Lin, mother of three kids

Supporting communities in the name of humanitarianism

By Liang Meilan

After the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, many international organizations provided generous relief to the disaster-stricken area. The American Red Cross was among the major overseas helpers. People may not realize, but many of their programs created in the quake's aftermath are still going.

One significant program is a long-term recovery project focused on the construction of water systems. It is led by Ramsey A. Rayyis, a representative of American Red Cross in China, who spent the last 20 years working around the world on projects in disaster and conflict areas.

Seeking water in after-quake zones

Two years have passed since an 8.0-magnitude earthquake in Sichuan Province shocked the world. Yet for many locals in the quake zone, life has not returned to normal. Particularly affected are those in remote and mountainous areas who are cut off from clean drinking water.

The earthquake shifted and dried up many water sources. Rayyis has been in Guangyuan County the last two years helping the local community build a water system.

"The earthquake significantly aggravated people's living situations," Rayyis said. "Most of them lost their farms. Being able to feed and warm themselves and their family still remains a struggle."

The water shortage is worse for villages higher up in the mountains.

"In those villages, water sources are too far and too few," Rayyis said. "Normally, people have to travel hours on tough rocky roads to get a small amount of water."

Rayyis spent the last 20 years doing humanitarian work with the Red Cross and other international agencies in places like the Middle East, the Caribbean, southern Caucasus and central Asia. Many of his projects have related to water supply and sanitation.

Rayyis praised Red Cross China's efficiency in disaster relief.

"In the US, the role of Red Cross is to raise food, clothing and shelter. The Chinese Red Cross has bigger roles, like rural sanitation and disease prevention," Rayyis said. "So they have a big role in the community."

Using his experience, Rayyis picked seven areas in Guangyuan where he could work with the local Red Cross branch and local authorities to seek water. From these areas, the water is purified and delivered to the homes of affected communities.

"The first challenge is identifying the area to work in," Rayyis said. "There are so many affected areas in Sichuan, it is difficult to narrow down where to focus your support. We cannot support all of them because our funds are limited."

Another similar project Rayyis is on is an assessment of villages in Shanxi Province, which is often hit with earthquakes.

"China is never short of disasters. We just help people to be better prepared when they happen," he said.

HIV/AIDS "peer education" in high-risk communities

Another part of Rayyis' job in China is HIV/AIDS prevention and anti-stigma education in Tianjin, where there are many high-risk groups.

In China, as in many parts of the world, those who are HIV positive or have AIDS face discrimination and stigma.



Ramsey Rayyis (right) chats with a Mongolian herdsman after a harsh winter killed thousands of livestock.

Photo provided by Ramsey A. Rayyis

matization. The disease can cause lots of unfounded fears in communities.

"We are here to spread general knowledge of the disease, raise people's awareness of how to take precautions and reduce the fear, following a peer education mode," Rayyis said.

Peer education begins with identifying high-risk groups and educating them through knowledge-sharing social events and group lectures. The hope is that those educated will then share with others.

"It is not someone from the outside coming in and pushing an agenda and pushing information on those who aren't ready to accept," Rayyis said. "It is trying to find members of those communities that are willing to learn and having them share directly with other people in their circles."

One group Rayyis targets is university students who are away from home and find themselves with newfound freedom.

He also tries to educate gay men and sex workers. "We try to reach those communities and to educate them on how to have safe sex, like using condoms," he said.

"I understand that it is a very sensitive subject in China and certain policies make many actions illegal," Rayyis said, adding that the fact that something is "underground" doesn't mean it doesn't exist.

This program is also supported by local Red Cross branches.

Those interested in supporting Rayyis' efforts in China and the Red Cross, feel free to email him at rayyis@gmail.com.

Argentine soccer celebrity's charity visit ends in controversy

By Wang Yu

Diego Maradona, the legendary soccer player and former coach of Argentina's national team, finished his charity tour of China on Thursday.

The "king of soccer" arrived in Beijing on November 4 for his first event, a charity lunch. His one-week China tour consisted of a series of charity banquets, visits to hospitals and soccer games in Jinan, Shandong Province and Dongguan, Guangdong Province. He also visited Hefei, Anhui Province.

Maradona was also appointed as ambassador of the Red Cross Society of China.

According to an agreement between the soccer star and the Red Cross Society of China, all the income from the tour will be used to build hospitals for Chinese cancer patients in impoverished areas. While Maradona was cheered everywhere, fans were disappointed that he did not play in the two charity matches.

The first match in Jinan between an Argentine League team and Dalian Aerbin was supposed to kick off 2:30 pm



Maradona's China trip disappointed many of his Chinese fans. IC Photo

last Friday. Many fans arrived early for a good view of the superstar. However, Maradona showed up two hours late, and when he arrived he only showed off some ball-control tricks before returning to the grandstand.

According to the promotion, Maradona should have played at least 20 minutes. The organizer said that the soccer player did not play due to a leg injury.

Two days later Maradona arrived in Dongguan for the second match against GMC United, a team of Chinese athletes and entrepreneurs. The king of soccer promised he would play at a press conference, only to eat his words again. He only joined a local primary school in a halftime scrimmage.

Ticket prices for these events ranged from 200 to 800 yuan, and

many fans demanded refunds. The *Commercial Times* reported that only 5 yuan out of each ticket sale will actually go to charity.

In Dongguan, a local real estate company sponsored 2 million yuan. In a separate venture, Maradona and his team took about 5 million for an appearance.

"I have been a fan of the Argentine national team for a long time, but I won't spend so much money on 'charity matches' if we don't know where the money's going," said Liu Yi, a soccer fan. "Additionally, the teams are not that good."

Maradona left Beijing after attending a party with some Chinese celebrities.

Over the summer, several NBA players visited China for charity. These events have become a way for athletes to establish themselves in the China market.

Yang Yong, the official responsible for Maradona's event in Hefei, said that all the proceeds will go toward helping cancer patients. Yang also said that it is understandable for Maradona to participate in other commercial events.

Netizens experience Cameron's visit through micro-blog



David Cameron's China trip won great attention from Chinese netizens thanks to the British embassy's micro-blog. **CFP Photo**

By Liang Meilan

The British embassy's micro-blog on Sina.com had live feeds of Prime Minister David Cameron leading the country's biggest ever delegation to China on Monday. The videos and photos created a stir among Chinese netizens.

The micro-blog broadcast, titled "Prime Minister's 48 hours in China," opened at 9:30 am on Tuesday. It started with a photo of him getting off the flight and a message: "Guess what topics Cameron will talk on."

In China, many netizens are used to recording emotions and anecdotes on micro-blogs. Important events are frequently discussed on social networking platforms.

"A glimpse into such a significant meeting of two countries' top leaders via an online platform

is still rarely seen in China," said Fang Ming, public relations officer of the British Council in Beijing, who said their program was the first of its kind.

In recent years, major national events like the National People's Congress have been broadcast in real time on websites that are open for discussion. It reflects the government's willingness to have people participate in political affairs.

"I'm excited to see micro-blogs becoming ubiquitous," a comment from "Xiaolang" reads. "Following the example set by Premier Wen Jiabao and his micro-blog in February, the British embassy's micro-blog lets people get a close look at international relations, and marks another milestone in political transparency in our country."

Unlike from formal coverage from traditional media such as Xinhua News Agency, "the intention of the program is to report Cameron's visit in a more detailed and casual way, providing useful information and interesting anecdotes that are easy for netizens to accept," Fang said.

For example, the blog reported Cameron's visit to the Tesco Supermarket near East Fourth Ring Road, his first stop in the capital.

Another important feature of this program is in its frequent emphasis in details. "A heated discussion we found to be very interesting was over Cameron's accessory pin, a poppy flower. Hundreds of netizens took part in the discussion, trying to guess the meaning of this red flower," Fang said.

"It's actually a commemoration

of British soldiers lost during World War I and II," Fang explained.

Timely topics were also discussed. Many were concerned about studying overseas in Britain, Britain's creative industry and the 2012 London Olympics.

A discussion titled, "Should British students come to China?" elicited 202 comments. Most commenters welcomed British students and hoped they could help promote China's international image.

"A lot of views shared on the blog help us look deeper into Chinese people's attitudes toward certain issues and their hopes concerning the relationship between the two countries," Fang said. "They constitute an important data source, acting as a reference for making our services better meet people's needs."

EU opens Chinese gateway center

By Han Manman

European small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that want to export to or invest in the Chinese market can seek help from a new center that will provide information, advice, training and matchmaking opportunities.

Funded by the European Commission (EC), the new center opened recently in Beijing.

EC Vice President Antonia Tajani, responsible for industry and entrepreneurship, said 25 percent of European small and medium-sized businesses export or have exported their goods or services in the past three years. This percentage is expected to increase considerably, especially in fast-growing markets such as China.

However, Tajani said SMEs are often less equipped than large enterprises for dealing with various problems and complications, like foreign legal systems.

Tajani said the center will help European SMEs overcome the challenges of the Chinese market during the early stages of business development.

Tajani said SMEs can turn to the center for information on topics such as the procedure regarding company registration in China, employment contracts for recruiting locally or the process of certifying technical standards.

The center will also highlight areas of opportunities for EU SMEs and help them do business within the Chinese regulatory environment.

"The center will help SMEs from across the EU's 27 member states," said Brian Outlaw, executive director of the China-Britain Business Council. "Bringing together a critical mass of European SMEs to matchmaking events organized by the center is expected to raise the interest of Chinese partners."

"The launch of the center in Beijing is an important step in the implementation of the Small Business Act, the EU's main initiative in support of SMEs, especially in China," Tajani said. "The center is also in the realization of the 'think small first' principle that embodies European SME policy."

The new center will be operated by a consortium of European chambers of commerce, led by the China-Britain Business Council and including the Benelux, French, German, Italian and Spanish chambers in Beijing, as well as the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China and Eurochambres.

It will cooperate with business support organizations based outside Beijing and in particular with European Enterprise Network points being established throughout China.

100,000 Strong Initiative seeks to bring more American students into China

By Li Zhixin

A US education official was in China earlier this week seeking support from the Ministry of Education and business leaders for a presidential program designed to dramatically increase the number of Americans studying in China.

Carola McGiffert is director of the 100,000 Strong Initiative, which seeks to send more American students to China to better understand the challenges of a sophisticated bilateral relationship.

"In terms of global peace and security, nothing is more important and complicated than Sino-US relations," McGiffert said. "No major problems – global economic recovery or climate

change or nuclear non-proliferation – can be effectively resolved without the participation of both the US and China.

"However, we Americans have to gain in-depth knowledge about China first."

McGiffert said the number of Chinese students in the US is eight times that of American students in China. And the number of Chinese who study English is more than 600 times that of Americans who study Chinese.

"The huge imbalance on mutual understanding can wreck the bilateral strategic trust between the two countries," she said. "Making up for the deficiency of such an imbalance is critical."

According to the US embassy, from 2007 to 2008, there were 13,165 undergraduates and 1,000 high school students from the US studying in China.

"Three years ago, China was just fifth among Americans' hot destinations for study abroad; now it is third," McGiffert said.

McGiffert said many American students are interested in language, culture, history and humanity in China. She said the US government will encourage American students to take advantage of China's knowledge in other disciplines, including Chinese medicine, engineering, art and social science.

The 100,000 Strong Initiative

was proposed by Barack Obama at the end of last year when he visited China. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton officially launched the project in May in Beijing.

The Obama administration also encourages teachers, interns and other professionals to go to China under the program as well, McGiffert said.

The program will spend an estimated \$68 million (460 million yuan), with all funds coming from non-governmental institutions in China, Hong Kong and the US. The Chinese government has also promised to provide 10,000 scholarships for those who study in China in the next four years.

Dining for a worthwhile cause at 32 restaurants

By Liang Meilan

Last Saturday night, as always, first-tier restaurants in the capital filled up with diners. But for those in 32 restaurants around the city, things were a bit different: banquet tables were laid out, and those who ate there did so for a charitable cause.

Chi Fan for Charity (Eating for Charity), in its second year, organized by Michael D. Crain, CEO of MDC Strategies Company, raised money for three local charities: the Dandelion School for children of migrant workers, an AIDS-awareness organization called Prevention Through Education and the Cultural Development Center for Rural Women.

The event was part of efforts to forge a larger philanthropic community in town.

The event is intended to bring together restaurants that are willing to donate a table of meals and ask individuals to apply for seats at prices from 500 to 1,000 yuan, with all the proceeds going to charity. This year, more than 20,000 yuan was raised, evenly divided among the three charities.

"It is a very creative way of achieving charitable causes through a social event," said Ye Xiaowei, chairperson of the Dandelion School, praising Crain and his wife's constant support of the school.

During the 12-week preparation with a 16-volunteer steering



One group of diners in a Chi Fan for Charity dinner

Photo provided by Michael D. Crain

committee, Crain said he was impressed by people's willingness to give time and money to assist the less fortunate.

"Restaurants make great meals, but they cannot feed everybody. So I got the idea of getting meals donated," Crain said. "And the Chi Fan for Charity concept came, which drew support from my friends who own restaurants."

1949 - The Hidden City was one of the restaurants involved.

Sarah Li, restaurant manager, said that contributing to charities and events has always been part of their marketing strategy.

"We believe that it's important to take social responsibility and give back to the community we live in," she said.

Crain's interest in pushing the philanthropic spirit in China led him to create an after-dinner party at Hatsune. "All the tables came together after having a good meal to revel way into the wee

hours," he said. "It was a good chance to meet a community of people with kind hearts and the same intention to help others."

Crain said it was a pity that only 25 percent of the attendees were Chinese. "My original intention was to push the philanthropic spirit in China to help disadvantaged people who need a constant network to rely on," he said. "But unfortunately, not many of the Chinese restaurants we contacted gave us feedback."

Event

Social Innovation Meet Up

Social Innovation Meet Up is holding its monthly meeting with the theme "Developing Employability and Life Skills in Youth." Attendees will learn about two organizations that provide young people with career and professional skill training to better equip them for an increasingly tightening job market, and to empower them to become entrepreneurs. Speakers include Ryan Du, founder of China Youth Education Assistance Foundation, and others.

Where: Compassion for Migrant Children, Room 233, Xintai Building, 8 Xiaguang Li, Chaoyang District

When: November 13, 2-4 pm

Email: events@fyse.org

Cost: 30 yuan including snacks and coffee

Gift charity bazaar

An abundance of unique handmade crafts from NGOs, local and international artisans and artists in 798 Art District will be on sale. A portion of the proceeds will go to local NGOs. The event is organized by Stage One Productions and started in 2008. It was inspired by an art exhibition called "The Gift," which benefited local migrant children.

Where: Canadian International School of Beijing, 38 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: November 14, 11 am - 4 pm

Tel: 6465 7788

Cost: 10 yuan, free for children under 10

Conversation at Capital M: Values in China

Three foreign correspondents in China - *New Yorker's* Evan Osnos, *Forbes'* Gady Epstein and *New York Times'* Ian Johnson (author of *Wild Grass*) - will participate in a panel discussion about how the tremendous changes in Chinese society have affected people's lifestyles and values.

Where: Capital M, 3/F, 2 Qianmen Pedestrian Street, Dongcheng District

When: November 14, 4-5 pm

Tel: 6702 2727

Cost: 60 yuan, 10 yuan for students

FunGym

O'le Sports Center is offering a program called FunGym, designed by Zhao Bing, former head coach of the Chinese rhythmic gymnastics team and former Canadian national coach in gymnastics. This special program will help children ages 2 and up develop their physical, cognitive, emotional and social abilities.

Where: O'le Sports Center, 5 Shimenmencun Lu, Baiziwangqiaoxi, Dongsihuan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Sunday every week, 9-10 am

Tel: 13439788555

Cost: 125 yuan

(By Liang Meilan)

Expat participates in census among Sanlitun community



Malaika Hahne puts on the uniform of a census taker.

Photo by Dai Bing/Beijing Daily

"Hello! My name is Malaika Hahne, my Chinese name is Ma Lan, but I'm not associated with the Ma Lan Noodle Restaurant downstairs," said a German expat, who visited several apartments around Sanlitun during the census period from November 1 to 10.

She was joined by other census takers who live in a Sanlitun community with 57,000 residents, more than 3,000 of whom are foreigners from more than 20 countries and regions. It is the community with the highest density of foreigners in Beijing.

The 6th national population census counted foreigners living in China for the first time. But getting the word out, in multiple languages, was a cause of concern.

This is where Hahne came in.

Hahne works as a supervisor for a solar-energy company based in Lianyungang, Jiangsu Province, but she is based in Beijing most of the time. In her leisure time, she goes to the residential community office to play ping-pong and chat with local staff, and has become a star in the community.

Asked if she would be interested to work as a census volunteer, she accepted without hesitation.

On November 1, Hahne received an hour's training in the community office, understood the questions she needed to ask and got to know two other Chinese census takers. Their work was to visit the 110 foreign families in the community.

Hahne would greet the family members and explain her work in English. Questions included: names of family members, nationality, birth date, time of arrival in China, length of stay, education level and profession.

Hahne served as the translator for her partners, who jotted down the answers before handing them over to the residents for their signature. The first family was from the US, and everything went as planned.

But the team then ran into problems. Some people declined to invite them into their homes, and other apartments had no one inside.

"We were not discouraged," Hahne said. They visited the houses during the evening hours

again and again until the surveys were finished.

Over the 10 days, the team often worked past 10 pm to compile and sort the questionnaires.

"We have such a diversified expat community," Hahne said. They come from the US, Germany, Spain, France and Japan.

"Most of the expats were willing to take the survey once you handed it to them because they realized this was being conducted by the government," Hahne said. "What they care about is privacy. We always ensure we keep their information confidential. That solves the problem."

Hahne said she was proud to do the job and happy to be able to do something for the community. *Beijing Daily* praised her as "an example of an expat merging with the local community."

During the 10-day census, the residential community set up an office for the work, said Li Changlin, the community's census officer.

"Our community is close to the embassies and central business district, so that's why we have so many foreigners here," Li said.

Other places with high numbers of expats include Wangjing, Wudaokou and 798.

(By Zhao Hongyi)

Helping the city's abandoned pets find new homes

By Annie Wei

Last Saturday afternoon, Hutongren, a small inn in Ju'er Hutong off Nanluogu Xiang, hosted a meeting of 170 people interested in helping stray animals.

It was an event organized by Chris Barden, a 40-something scriptwriter from the US, and his Chinese friends who volunteer at Pet Orphans Home, a local non-profit organization.

Called Mobile Adoption, it was the first of its kind aimed at helping stray animals find homes through an introductory event held at different communities every Saturday.

Pet Orphans Home showcased a few of their stray dogs. However, interested attendees were not allowed to take them home right away. The orphanage requires interested parties to apply and allow for follow-ups, to ensure that they can provide these once-abandoned dogs a long-term family.

The event was prepared in just three days. As of press time, one of the dogs found a new permanent home.

"We had 20 to 30 people leave their contact information for volunteering," said Tang Li, one of the organizers.

"There are different kinds of holidays and festivals in the city, and we hope every Saturday can become stray animals' adoption day," Barden said.

Barden said they would continue the event in the future and hopes more people around China will care for animal welfare.

There are a few ways to help stray animals in China, and



Mobile Adoption at Hutongren

adopting abandoned ones is only one of them. The Pet Orphans Home cares for pets in addition to offering adoption services. Those interested can visit blog.sina.com.cn/ilovedogdog.

Pet Orphans Home

This orphanage in suburban Beijing began in 2007 as a non-profit and charitable organization aimed at rescuing and rehabilitating injured, abused and abandoned dogs and cats.

They also educate the public about responsible, humane animal care and emphatically appeal for making welfare laws for animals to protect them against abuse.

The orphanage also needs volunteers and donations like pet food and pet items, and cash for medical care. People who find stray animals but cannot raise them can also contact the orphanage for help.

According to its website, the orphanage provides all rescued dogs and cats with a medical exam, vaccinations, free spaying or neutering and veterinary care



The Mobile Adoption poster is linked to douban.com.

Photos provided by Mobile Adoption

as needed.

By the end of September 2009, the orphanage had helped 76 abandoned pets find new homes and has provided a temporary home for 113 homeless animals.

However, to make sure the

once-abandoned pets find a reliable new home, the orphanage has some basic requirements for anyone interested in pet adoption. Applicants need to be at least 18, have a stable job and income, and promise to keep the pet.

Heating hotlines released to insure a cozy winter

By Annie Wei

The city's heating supply office released hotlines of 11 major heating supply companies this week. Operators will be available to take calls 24 hours a day to register complaints and repair requests.

Different hotlines are supervised by different authorities. Line 96069, for example, is controlled by Beijing District Heating Group; line 6235 7575 is run by the Beijing Municipal Administration Committee.

The committee said that residents can call 96310 to report any heating supply delay, breakdown or termination. Authorities urge heating suppliers to guarantee the service. Heating companies will face a fine of 5,000 to 30,000 yuan for not complying.

So far, a few situations have called for review. Residents on the higher floors of apartment buildings have complained that the average temperature is below 18 C, forcing them to turn on their air conditioner to keep warm.



Twelve heating hotlines provide 24-hour service.

CFP Photo

The situation stems from real estate developers giving inaccurate data when setting up heating pipes, according to the Beijing Heating District Group.

For example, a developer may say it is building a 50,000-square-meter building, when in fact the area is much larger. As a result,

the heating system that's installed isn't adequate to cover such an extensive area.

If the indoor temperature is lower than 18 C after 24 hours of the heat coming on, residents have the right to ask the heating company for compensation, like refunding the heating fee.

The refund rate is 40 percent if the indoor temperature is within 2 degrees of the standard, and 60 percent if it's within 2-4 degrees lower. Residents can get a full refund if their indoor temperature is less than 14 C.

A resident can ask a third-party company to test the indoor temperature. The heating supply company has to cover the fee of the third-party tester if fault is proven.

If a resident's apartment is flooded by heating pipes, the real estate developer should compensate for all damages, said Tang Hongxin, a lawyer from Beijing Yingke Law Firm.

Furthermore, property management and heating companies are separate entities, Tang said. New residents should not be responsible for former residents' heating bills.

The heating service hotline is 6235 7575. Call 96069 to find out which heating company covers your apartment area.

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyi@ynet.com

Recently, I've seen many locals burning paper and other things by the roadside at night. At first I thought they were doing it to keep warm, but it seems strange because the fire's not even big enough to warm your hands. Do you know what they're doing?

Don't worry, they're actually engaging in an ancestor worship ritual. The first day of the 10th lunar month is Hanyijie (November 6 this year), a time for people to burn clothes, food and furniture (all represented by paper, of course). This is expected to make its way to people's ancestors and keep them out of the cold. The traditional ritual reflects the importance of family to Chinese people.

I'd like to find an English-speaking, female yoga instructor who can offer one-on-one personal training in my house. Can you help?

It's unwise to look at local gyms because one-on-one home training has yet to catch on. There are workshops targeted at expats at DNA Fitness Studio, which offers personal sports training in both Chinese and English. You can call them at 13801096732.

Do you know where I can repair my BlackBerry phone? There are no official BlackBerry stores here. I already have the replacement parts I need, I just need to find a reliable technician.

There are many repair stores in Zhongguancun (subway stop off Line 4), and many of them can repair all kinds of phones. But we suggest you to go to one that specializes in the BlackBerry. Check out Shiyujisu, a store has been working on BlackBerry repair service for more than 10 years. It is located at A606, Haojing Building, 108 Zhichunlu, Haidian District. Call them at 5166 9000.

I have some luxury items including a fur coat, leather coat and a variety of handbags. Is there a place where I can find maintenance for these items?

Check out Upper Luxury Maintenance Store. You can find it at 12 Xinyuanlu, Chaoyang District, near Liangmaqiao subway station (Line 10). Call them at 6465 4838 for more information.

(By Liang Meilan)

Mapping the seven

Exploring the city's garbage



A flock of sheep feeds on garbage at a Tongzhou District dump.

By He Jianwei

A new Google map of Beijing shows 400 strange spots marked in a ring around the city. Each is one of the dumps on which millions of Beijingers depend to keep the city clean.

Since 2008, one artist has been driving to these dumps to photograph the tons of rubbish the city abandons every day. The dirty and unfamiliar scenes are a chilling reminder of the delicate balance between humans and the environment.

His message to urbanites is clear: we live in a city besieged by waste.

Many of the dumps are located between the fifth and sixth ring roads, earning the new garbage loop the dubious distinction of being the city's "seventh ring."

Wang Jiuliang



The 34-year-old artist Wang Jiuliang's eyes are bloodshot from numerous weary nights spent editing his new documentary.

The film, *Beijing Besieged by Waste*, records his project of photographing the city's garbage dumps over the last 19 months.

Last Saturday, Wang spoke about the experience at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art.

Born in Anqiu, Shandong Province, in 1976, Wang was an odd child. When classmates were playing games in front of their house, he was indoors reading Chinese philosophy.

It was the first of many ways he attempts to distinguish himself.

Wang passed the college entrance exams on his third try. In 1996, he started attending a university in Shandong Province but soon dropped out because of the "boring" campus life.

He returned to high school and took yet another college entrance exam that placed him in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province for one year. He soon dropped out again for the same reasons.

He took the third exam in 2003 to enroll in the Cinema-Television School at Communication University of China. By this time, he was seven years older than his classmates.

But despite all his false starts, Wang knew what he wanted to do as early as 1997, when he opened a personal photography studio in Jinan, Shandong Province.

His passion for photography and keen observational skills won Wang the chance to showcase his works at the Pingyao International Photography Festival three times.

In 2008, Wang returned to his hometown to shoot his "Paradise" series, a commentary with consumerist themes. He found the landscape in his hometown had become sullied. Plastic bags once used to contain farm-

ing chemicals and pesticides lined the streets.

During his childhood, many families used chemicals. But recent years have seen a shift to plastic-packaged chemicals.

That realization opened Wang's eyes: "I produced a staggering amount of trash only because of their pattern of consumption."

"If people don't take action, the garbage will continue to pile up," Wang said.

Wang decided to investigate where the trash goes when he returned to Beijing. "The construction of skyscrapers and crowded shopping centers and restaurants, but we seldom see the trash around Beijing," he said.

To understand the reality, Wang drove his bike almost 8,000 kilometers around the city, taking 4,000 pictures at 400 garbage dumps between October 2008 and April 2010.

He located the capital's largest dump and took images from Google Earth and marked each after visiting.

Beijing has 13 large landfill sites, eight located between Fifth Ring Road and Sixth Ring Road, he said. The city's 18 million residents produce 10 million tons of trash each day.

"To my surprise, the garbage dumps are much larger than many of us imagine: I could smell them before I saw them," he said.

"But I'm not interested in exposing dirty dumps. What I want to talk about is the relationship between the dumps and the surrounding environment."

One photo of a dump in Changping shows a creek running next to the dump. Unsurprisingly, the water is now polluted. That doesn't stop a man at a nearby dairy farm from grazing there.

Another picture of a Tongzhou dump

Death ring

of sheep being fed in the dump itself. The garbage was mostly from nearby residential neighborhoods. In the background, residential high-rises are going up, each priced at more than 15,000 yuan per square meter.

The problem was even more severe in a Daxing dump. Wastewater from the dump has seeped into the underground water table, causing an irreversible poisoning of the area's groundwater. The facility is surrounded by dozens of farms which pump this water onto their vegetables.

"If the milk we drink and the mutton in our hot pots and the vegetables on our tables are coming from places next to the dump, it's hard to say garbage isn't affecting our lives," Wang said.

Wang's photography work in the dumps already won the gold award for Outstanding Artist of the Year at the 2009 Lianzhou International Photography Festival.

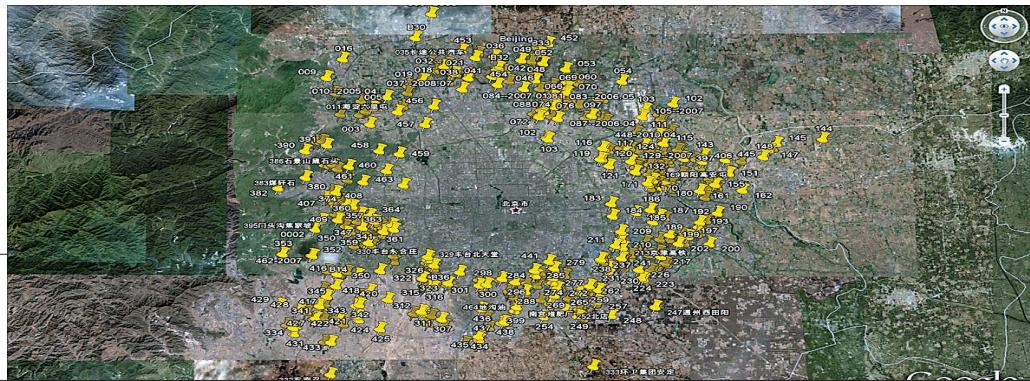
"The best prize for my work is this chance to raise environmental awareness," he said. "Everyone is both a producer and victim of trash. Consumerism is the real criminal."

His project has already influenced the habits of himself and his friends. He carries his own toothbrush and towel and refuses to use the disposable ones supplied by hotels. Some of his friends have also been inspired to become vegetarians.

"I'm not an extreme environmentalist. I just believe that sometimes we must control our desire to consume if we want to reduce our trash," he said.

Wang hopes his documentary will be able to reach more viewers than his photos did. Next year it will be entered in the Cinéma du Réel international film festival in France.

He is now planning his next project, a supermarket that will only sell packaged goods he collects from the dump.



Wang Jiuliang's Google map of Beijing's dumps

"I'm not an extreme environmentalist. I just believe that sometimes we must control our desire to consume if we want to reduce our trash."

"The best prize for my work is this chance to raise environmental awareness. Everyone is both a producer and victim of trash. Consumerism is the real criminal."

"I'm not interested in exposing dirty, smelly city dumps. What I want to talk about is the relationship between the dumps and the surrounding environment."

Many people make their living by scavenging in the dumps. The plastic bags at the far end of the picture were blown here from a nearby dump, and the cardboard boxes in the foreground came from a nearby factory.

Photos provided by Goethe-Institut China





Will Herta Muller be lost in translation?

By He Jianwei

The Chinese book market seems to have an insatiable demand for the works of Nobel literature laureates like Orhan Pamuk, John Maxwell Coetzee and Vidiahar Surajprasad Naipaul.

When Romanian-born German poet and novelist Herta Muller won the Nobel Prize last October, more than 32 Chinese publishers rushed to win the contract for a Chinese edition.

Beijing Fonghong Media Company announced it secured the book rights in January, and in the last nine months it has published 10 of Muller's books, including novels, short stories, essays and poems. It was the first time Muller's books saw print in simplified Chinese.

Her works have been met with as much praise as they have criticism by the public. While local readers appreciate having access to her works, they question the quality of such rapid translations.

Why Herta Muller?

The sudden enthusiasm for a writer so unknown on the mainland is nothing new.

But Muller should be known. She visited Beijing at the initiation of the Goethe-Institut China in 1992. Few Chinese remember her visit, and it was accompanied by the publication of only two of her short stories.

Many publishers saw her books as too risky for the China market. But they have changed their tune since she won the Nobel Prize.

"Muller's works are readable and valuable: full of poetic beauty and profound philosophy. She expresses a deep concern for humanity in her stories," said Zhang Xiaobo, president of Beijing Fonghong Media Company.

The Nobel Prize has become a lightning rod that sucks Chinese publishers to a single point of focus. "Literature has been marginalized in China. Only the 'best' writers win attention," Zhang said.

"Although many book awards, such as the Booker Prize in the UK, Akutagawa Prize in Japan and The Prix Goncourt in France, are incredibly reputable, few people follow their winners. The Nobel Prize is how our readers judge what is 'classical,'" Zhang said.

Even so, not all Nobel laureates become bestselling authors in China. "Chinese readers have to find resonance from the books for them to become popular," he said.

Pamuk's *My Name is Red* was popular because of its depiction of a struggle between Western and Chinese culture. "A rediscovery of the value of traditional Chinese culture has been an important theme during the past decade," he said.

Muller's works may strike a similar chord of sympathy.

Born in 1953 in Nitchidorf, a German-speaking village in western Romania, Muller's father served in the Waffen-SS, a multi-ethnic combat force under the Nazi government; her mother lived for five years in a Gulag labor camp in Ukraine following the war.

But Muller's life experience is most influenced by the Romanian dictatorship she lived under prior to leaving for West Germany in 1987. Most of her books deal with early life in her hometown.

Her 1993 novel *The Land of Green Plums* depicts four young people living under and fleeing from Ceausescu's Romania. "Muller interprets the eternal themes – freedom and consciousness – in her books. She will surely find sympathetic Chinese readers," Zhang said.

Who are the translators?

Zhang's search for a translator began in 2009. "Of course we needed someone with a mastery of German and Chinese, but we also needed someone who loved Muller's work," he said.

The company worked with a pool of 15 researchers and translators in German literature, including Li Yiqiong, the first translator of Muller's fiction on the mainland in the 1990s, Yu Yang, an expert on German Nobel Prizewinner Gunter Wilhelm Grass, and Liu Huiru, a professor at the University of Trier in Germany.

"Most of the translators studied or lived in Germany; some had contact with the author," Zhang said. "In order to translate Muller's *Hunger and Silk*, one of our German-Chinese translators Ding Na went to listen to Muller lecture at Munich's library to ask her some questions."

Muller's style is poetic. Her fiction uses extensive metaphor, which is rarely easy to carry into Chinese. "She speaks a German dialect from Swabia, a southern area in Germany, which only increased the difficulty of translation," said Li, who translated the collection of essays *The King Bows and Kills*, depicting Muller's life under secret police surveillance.

"Her words are simple, but each word is a gem full of profound philosophy. Because the dictatorship in Romania had great influence on her language, she struggles to convey the power buried in depression," she said.



Photos provided by Beijing Fonghong Media Company

Political or literary

Winning the Nobel Prize rattled Muller's classification in the literary world. She has been labeled both a Cold War writer and one interested in humanity.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Muller's win was "a wonderful sign" 20 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

But Muller is not popular in Germany: the German Book Prize glossed over her when awarding the best German-language novel last year.

Before she won the prize, Muller's influence was limited to German academicians. "Few ordinary readers knew her," Li said. "After she won the prize, German readers knew her but were not willing to read her books."

She may write in German, but the Romanian countryside she describes is as distant from the average German reader as China.

But the Nobel judges praised her depiction of a "landscape of the dispossessed" with "the concentration of poetry and the frankness of prose." Chinese critics and writers find her text full of loneliness and despair.

"When I read her words, I thought the political meaning was unimportant. She writes about life and humanity," Qiu Huadong, a novelist, said. "She uses poetic and obscure language to describe human reaction in a certain year and certain situation. Readers who are able to enjoy and understand poetry will easily accept her books."



By Wang Yu

Sociologists have described hardcore gamers as an important but silent group in modern society. For the most part they are quiet and law abiding, choosing to play at home rather than to go out looking for trouble.

Though their passions, especially video games, were initially created to help people kill time, they have also opened a new form of art. The last generation of parents may have seen games as terrible monsters out to rob their children of their education, but the once loathsome media is today finding mass acceptance.

Players still passionate about video games

Following the trend

Social and economic reforms beginning at the end of the 1970s were a turning point in Chinese culture. The period brought in a sudden influx of art, music and literature. Among these were video games, a medium then in its infancy.

But the incredible expense of video game systems, even in the West, made them a rare luxury in China until the 1990s.

For most children, owning a video game console was a big dream. Original products smuggled into China cost as much as 1,500 yuan – a price beyond the means of most families.

It was during his first primary school winter vacation that Billy Zheng received the ultimate present from his father: an 8-bit Nintendo Famicom.

"I remember that video game consoles quickly became essential for most kids, especially the boys. The economy grew fast and people earned more. But locally-made bootleg products were what really helped to bring down the price," Zheng, today a game-store owner, says.

These Famicom compatibles, today known as "Famiclones," were manufactured by factories in Fuzhou, Fujian Province. Many of the early game cartridges were also hacked up by bootleggers eager to cash in on the demand for cheap software.

Sega's Megadrive and Super Nintendo were also cracked and widely distributed on the mainland.

But the scene changed when Sony released its PlayStation on the local market in 1995.

First fantasy

It is impossible to understand the role Squaresoft's Final Fantasy VII played in popularizing video games and making Sony a serious contender in the game market. Released in January 1997, the game took Chinese players by storm and became an instant classic.

The visual effects – then cutting edge – and video sequences were signs to many fans that the video game had already evolved into an art form.

"My classmates and I talked about the game a lot back then. Role-playing games (RPGs) are usually designed for one player, but since most of us didn't have a

PlayStation we would all gather in someone's bedroom to watch them play," Zheng says.

"None of us understood Japanese so we had to sit down and read translations of all the scenes in a magazine, but even that was still fun."

The game influenced players' lifestyles. Many students tried to emulate the way the lead character talked and pursued girls at school who were similar to the game's love interest. Bedrooms equipped with a game console became the modern clubhouse.

"Even now I always hope to spend several days at home playing games, experiencing the story and hoping to be moved by the characters. That is what draws me to video games," Zheng says.

Underground scene

Huang Yu, an interior decorator, is a long-time game fan. He owns consoles from each generation from the Famicom to the PlayStation 3.

Recently Huang put in his pre-order for Gran Turismo 5, the latest installment in Sony's popular racing game franchise. But the PlayStation 3 is forcing long-time gamers to change their habits: its Blu-ray discs are notoriously difficult to pirate.

"I think that's a good thing. It helps protect intellectual property and makes us appreciate our games more. When you have to spend more than 200 yuan for a game, you tend to respect it," Huang says.

Unlike computer games, which require gamers to upgrade their PCs with each new big production, game consoles are typically a one-time investment that gets a return of several years of new and cheap games due to piracy problem earlier.

But 3,000 yuan is still a huge investment for many gamers.

During the era of the PlayStation, there was a phenomenon in which enterprising people in residential communities would open "game rooms": spartan underground rooms with chairs and televisions where – for a price – children could play for hours.

Online gaming has long been part of the Chinese mainstream. But while Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3 are often seen in ordinary Chinese homes, neither has been released in the country.

The reasons are complicated, but much of it has to do with mainstream public opinion that gaming is a waste of time.

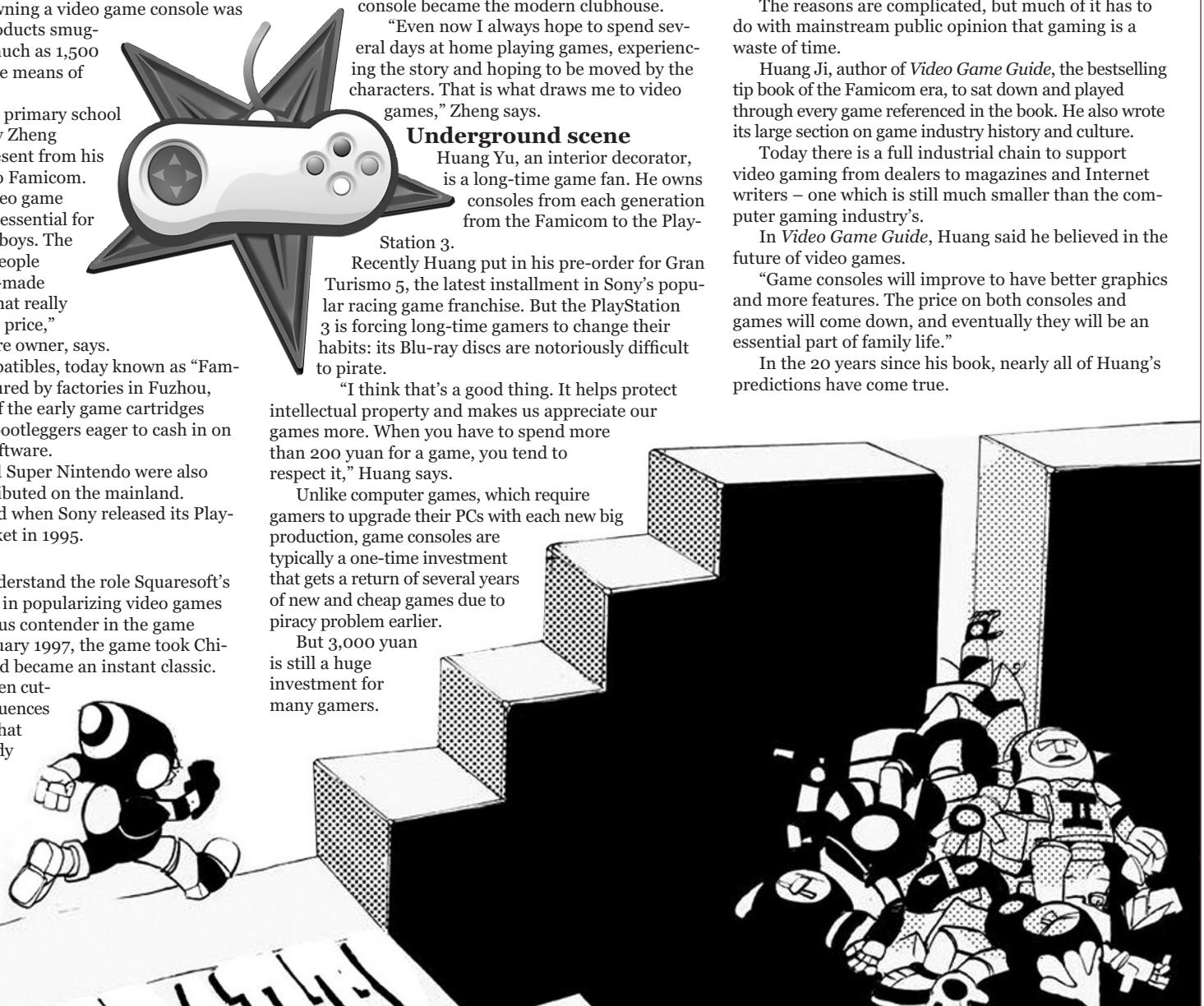
Huang Ji, author of *Video Game Guide*, the bestselling tip book of the Famicom era, to sat down and played through every game referenced in the book. He also wrote its large section on game industry history and culture.

Today there is a full industrial chain to support video gaming from dealers to magazines and Internet writers – one which is still much smaller than the computer gaming industry's.

In *Video Game Guide*, Huang said he believed in the future of video games.

"Game consoles will improve to have better graphics and more features. The price on both consoles and games will come down, and eventually they will be an essential part of family life."

In the 20 years since his book, nearly all of Huang's predictions have come true.



Soften winter with tea silk

By Liang Meilan

Gambiered Canton gauze (xiangyunsha) is a centuries-old material that's a superb alternative to silk during summertime because of its lightness and elasticity. Yet few fashion designers have attempted to use it for winter dresses.



A tea silk top, 2,000 yuan



Motor jacket, 4,800 yuan

Photos provided by Rechenberg

Kathrin von Rechenberg is an exception. She skillfully plays with this material commonly called tea silk. It was this material that drew her to China 10 years ago from Munich, and in her latest autumn and winter collection, most of the items use it.

Tea silk is made of ancient techniques, using natural materials like *liangshu* (a plant native to Canton) and pond mud with rich ferrous.

"Tea silk is an intemperate fabric generated after up to five years of an ecological dying process," Rechenberg said.

Many designers are afraid to use the material in winter wear because they think it's too light and smooth. But Rechenberg believes it can work.

"Unlike other silks, this doesn't stick to your skin," she said. "And the warm coppery and caramel tones of the tea silk look perfect in cold weather."

In this season's collection, broad horizontal bands of fabric are designed into her padded coats. In her jackets, the silk resembles long lengths of silk drying in the sunshine, and reflect the designer's inclination to use asymmetric lines in her creations.

Women can try the dark caramel-colored coat, made with horizontal bands of

Rechenberg

Where: 12 Xinyuanxili Dong Jie, Chaoyang District
Shop hour: 10 am - 5 pm
Tel: 6463 1788

silk-floss-padded tea silk (9,800 yuan). Another signature item is the multiple caramel-colored padded tea silk outfit (3,200 yuan).

Trained at the Paris couture school, apprenticed at the Haute Couture workshop of Jacques Fath and having spent four years as a model with various Paris couturiers such as Christian Dior, Christian Lacroix and Chanel, Rechenberg has embedded her own interpretation of dresses for self-confident ladies, which she calls elegant simplicity. Clear lines and flowing fabrics can be easily found in her designs.

Yet funny details can also be recognized. For example, a heavy silk jersey top with bat sleeves and draping front and high collar (2,000 yuan). Asian traditions like wide kimono sleeves, Chinese band collar and wraparound trousers are frequently used in her designs.

Although tea silk plays a major role in her design, Rechenberg also creatively plays with double-face cashmere, heavy silk jersey, fine merino wool and felt. She also plays on the similarities between leather and tea silk.

A fashion show of this collection will take place on December 3 and 4 at her store.

Li Ning/Zhang Da coat, 990 yuan



Tight pants / leggings, 390 yuan

The gift of organic

By Wang Yu

Don't look now, but Christmas is just around the corner. It's never too early to start thinking about gift ideas for the holiday season.

Shangrila Farms, the Beijing-based organic food producer, recently released Christmas packages to fit people's need. The products include a full range of natural skincare, coffee and honey.

The raw materials are bought from Shangri-La and surrounding areas in Yunnan Province, obeying the fair trade principle. Cooperating with local NGOs, the brand has doubled the income of local farmers since its coffee project started.

Run by sisters Sahra and Alia Malik, who came to China from New York in 2003 to join their mother, who runs an NGO in Yunnan Province, the company employs young professionals who live in the villages. Part of the company's earnings are donated to the Yunnan Mountain Her-

itage Center to help train local workers.

As for the products, the brand uses Arabica coffee beans from the mountains of Southern Yunnan. The beans are grown by local coffee farmers in remote areas at 800 to 1,200 meters above sea level, avoiding the use of chemicals like pesticides.

Honey is another one of Shangrila Farms' product lines, made by bees and small-scale farmers in mountainous regions. Experts monitor the beekeeping practices to make sure the honey is nutritious and pure, free from pesticides and other contaminants.

Chemicals are widely used in beekeeping nowadays. Organic beekeeping is very rare because it requires strict conditions for how the bees are raised. Shangrila Farms picks only reliable beekeepers who have sufficient knowledge of bees and adequate conditions to nurture them.

Shangrila Farms' cos-



The Christmas packages

Photo provided by Shangrila Farms

metic products are organic, unlike many that rely on heavy doses of chemicals. Pure ingredients are used to ensure their cosmetics products are safe for the skin.

Inspired by the culturally and ecologically diverse villages of Yunnan, the Shangrila Farms gift packages are designed as a collage of Tibetan flowers, created from images from local embroidery and tradi-

tional paintings.

The Christmas package is currently offered with a 20 percent discount. Free delivery and pay on delivery are also available for customers.

Shangrila Farms

Where: First floor, EC Mall, Zhongguancun, Haidian District. The products can also be found in shops such as Jenny Lou's.

Tel: 8454 9514

Designer sportswear for winter

By Annie Wei

This season's sportswear will be very colorful, lending some energy to the gloomy cold days. We recommend interested shoppers to check out Li Ning's flagship store at Wangfujing, which has many designer items significantly cheaper than its global counterparts like adidas and Nike.

A reversible down coat runs at 550-690 yuan. The Li Ning/Zhang Da women's wear is a bit like Stellar McCartney for adidas – both bring urban simplicity and women's elegance to sportswear. Zhang Da is a known independent fashion designer and his design has been showcased at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art.

Li Ning

Where: 249 Wangfujing Avenue, Dongcheng District
Open: 10 am - 9 pm
Tel: 6513 1590

Cozy wine bar and cafe at Sanlitun as winter escape

By Annie Wei

People who live in the Sanlitun area have been spoiled by many new shops, restaurants, cafes and bars this year. *Beijing Today* tries to catch up with the fast-changing dining scene.

Colibri – cupcake, Panini and coffee

By Annie Wei

Colibri has carved out a spot for itself at The Village North, surrounded by designer labels and high-end boutiques.

One can find 10 kinds of cupcakes (23 yuan each) with exotic flavors like Mocha, carrot, zucchini, green tea, orange and raspberry. They are all handcrafted and topped with soft butter cream, which looks absolutely irresistible. Kelly Wang, the store manager, said that they use quality ingredients and the cupcakes are baked fresh daily (115 yuan for six, 220 yuan for a dozen). Delivery is available.

Apart from the colorful spread of cupcakes, there is a delectable selection of wraps (48 yuan), sandwiches (38 to 58 yuan) and coffee (15 to 25 yuan) – perfect for lunch or those needing a mid-day snack.

Wang recommends the tuna nicoise salad (48 yuan) and the sambal prawn wrap with rice crisps, cress and Thai dressing (48 yuan).

The cafe uses glass to make the room feel simple yet spacious and elegant. In addition, the abundant use of wood on the floor and in tables and benches makes the space feel comfortable, warm and relaxing. There is an alfresco area, and high-speed Wi-Fi is available throughout.

"There isn't quite anything like this in Beijing at the moment," said Yu Sen-lun, a movie critic and a regular who spends many afternoons here with her laptop.

The cafe will introduce more lunch sets and cupcake flavors in the future.

Colibri

Where: Level LG 51, The Village North, 11 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 10 am – 10 pm
Tel: 6417 0808

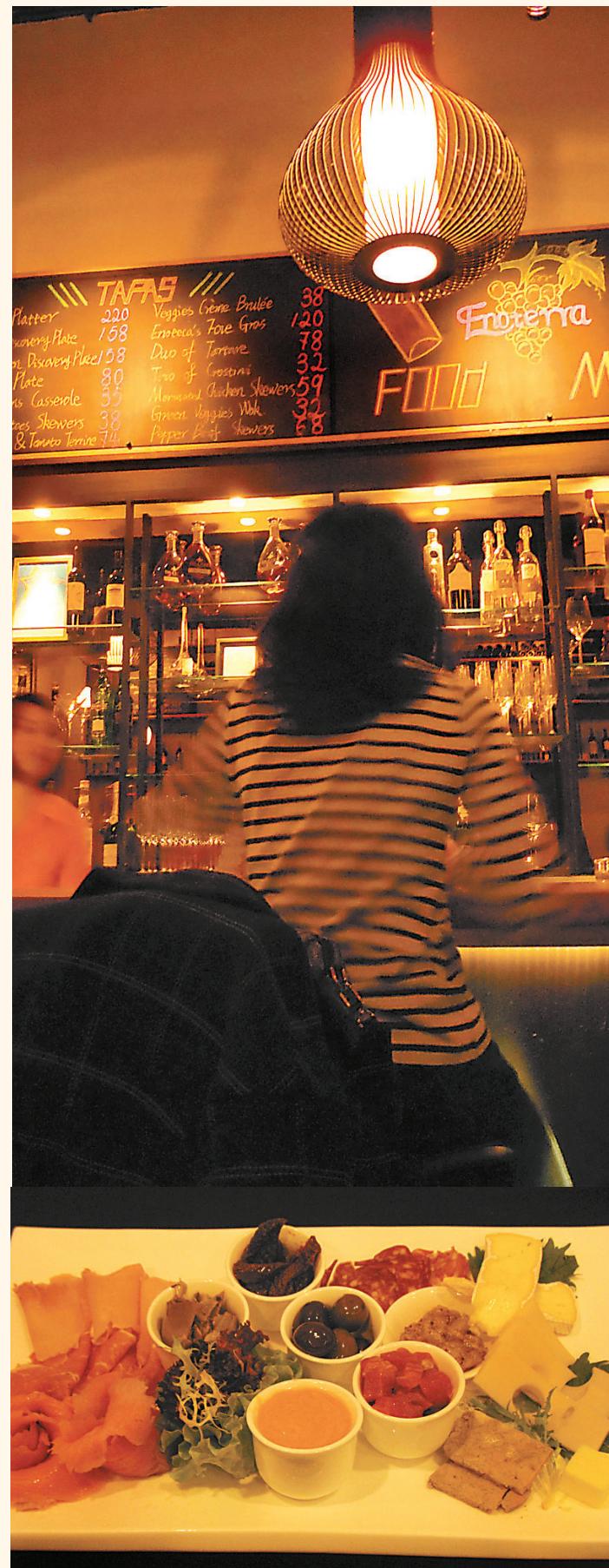


Cupcake, 23 yuan



Sandwiches, 38-58 yuan

Photos provided by Colibri



Photos by Ding Chunhan/Ludovic Lafleur

Enoterra – wide wine selection at reasonable prices

By Annie Wei

Finally, the French-invested wine bar Enoterra has moved from The Place to Nali Patio's fourth floor. Since opening on October 9, this wine bar has attracted many oenophiles.

Customers will find 180 different kinds of wines by bottle. The menu for bottled wine changes two or three times a year, and it changes monthly for wines that sell by the glass.

Ludovic Lafleur, the bar manager from France, recommends three red wines. For entry level, he recommends Enoterra's house wine, AOC Bordeaux (235 yuan per bottle). "It's a standard Bordeaux wine with impressive price quality," he said.

For a mid-priced choice, Lafleur recommends Seigneur de Fontimple – AOC Vacqueyras (398 yuan), a full body red from Rhone Valley in France.

For a more expensive red, he recommends Chateau de Meursault – AOC Bourgogne Pinot Noir (595 yuan). "It's a smooth one," he said. "Pinot Noir is a kind of grape that women find easy to drink."

For white wine, Lafleur recommends Joseph Castan Chardonnay – VDPPays d'Oc (145 yuan) from southern France. The wine is a bit dry, with strong citrus flavors like lemon and pear; Enoterra's selection – Sauvignon Blanc – Marlborough (220 yuan) – from New Zealand is a fresh and fruity, easy-to-drink kind, with a tropical fruits aroma. Lafleur's favorite is Patriarche Chablis – AOC Bourgogne (498 yuan), which is a dry, fresh and fruity wine. "A really nice one," he said.

Lafleur said that the store has five to six kinds of its own wine, made in countries like Chile, France and New Zealand.

Though it has its own brand and direct connections to more than 170 wine producers, Enoterra does not plan to turn itself into a wine wholesaler or distributor.

The manager said there were two main purposes for running the bar: first, to bring Enoterra's wine to Beijing; second, to give people in the wine bar a great experience.

Because Enoterra works with wine growers directly, customers can enjoy quality wines at reasonable prices.

Though there is a kitchen, Lafleur emphasizes Enoterra is a wine bar, not a restaurant. It offers simple salads, grilled Paninis, tapas and pastas. Enoterra also offers weekend brunch (80 to 120 yuan).

Enoterra is currently offering lots of promotions. On Friday, from 8 to 10 pm, a 200-yuan bottle of wine comes with free tapas like cheese and ham. Every day from 4 to 8 pm is the buy-one, get-one-free happy hour. Women can drink sparkling wine for free from 8 to 10 pm on Tuesdays. There is live music on Wednesday and Thursday nights from 8 to 11 pm.

Enoterra

Where: D406, 81 Sanlitun Bei Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 11 am – late
Tel: 5208 6076

Other newly opened places in this area

Refresh

This new cafe at the corner of the first floor of China View Building offers fresh salads, healthy smoothies, organic coffee and signature sandwiches. Food and drink average price 15-25 yuan. It has attracted many customers who work or live nearby. The second floor is quiet for regulars who read or work with their laptops.

Where: Room 102, 2 Gongti Dong Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 7:30 am – 10 pm

Iron chef

This white Japanese restaurant and wine bar is located next to the whisky bar Glenn. Offerings are similar to other Japanese restaurants, with set meals ranging from 35 to 70 yuan.

Where: Room 204, Taiyue Suites, 16 Sanlitun Nan Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 11:30 am – 2 pm; 5:30-11 pm
Tel: 8587 1382

With respect to the old, exploring the avant-garde

By He Jianwei

In less than half a century, the Dutch National Ballet has become the largest dance company in the Netherlands, attracting guest dancers and choreographers from more than 20 countries.

The company produces modern ballets and recreates full-length classics.

Earlier this year, the company invited Alexei Ratmansky, artist in residence at the American Ballet Theater and former artistic director of the Bolshoi Theater, to reinterpret Marius Petipa's *Don Quixote*, first performed in 1869.

Hundreds of choreographers have presented their version of *Don Quixote* in the last 140 years, but Ratmansky is trying to be as faithful to the original as possible.

He was challenged by the project because "we simply don't know what the original was," he said. He looked up information at Harvard University's library, which keeps historical records of Russian ballets in the 19th century, including choreographers' diaries and reviews in newspapers and magazines.

"This ballet lets dancers show off their best qualities," Ratmansky said.

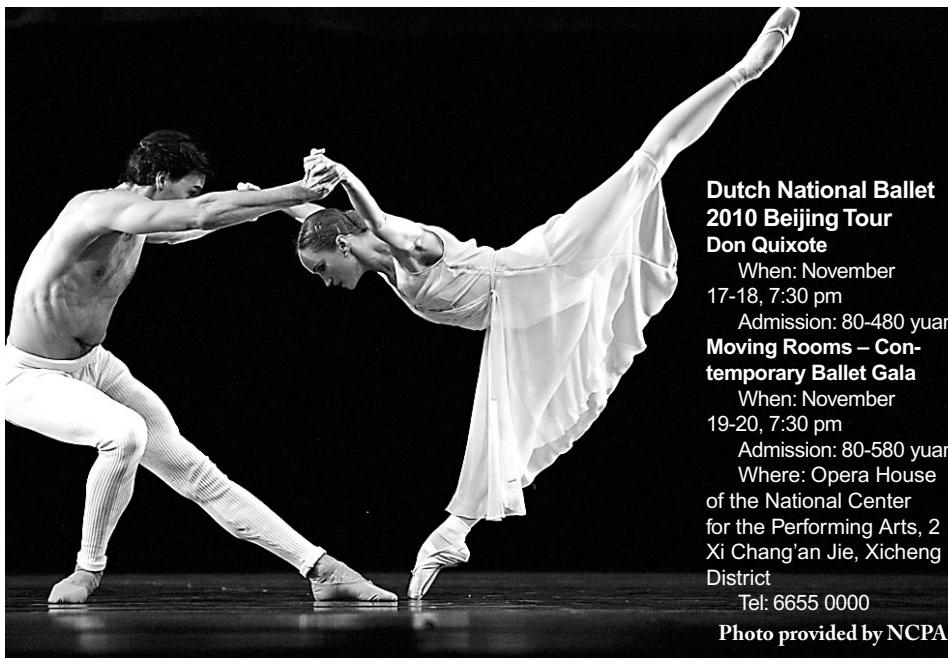
For instance, in the Bolshoi version, the first scene lasts no longer than one or two minutes, but in Petipa's version it was longer. "I think it is important for the audience to get to know the characters of *Don Quixote* and *Sancho Panza*," Ratmansky said.

Regarded as the closest version to the original, Rat-

mansky's *Don Quixote* sparked a newfound craze for ballet in Amsterdam.

Beijing audiences will be able to see this old – but new – version next week.

The Dutch National Ballet will also perform a contemporary ballet gala, the program *One Leads to Another*, which premiered in Amsterdam in October.



Dutch National Ballet 2010 Beijing Tour *Don Quixote*

When: November 17-18, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-480 yuan

Moving Rooms – Contemporary Ballet Gala

When: November 19-20, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-580 yuan
Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District
Tel: 6655 0000

Photo provided by NCPA

5

Friday, November 12

Exhibition Stubborn – Lu Yan Solo Exhibition

The artist insists on incorporating traditional Chinese paintings in his contemporary works, expressing an inner serenity on canvas.

Where: 9 Art Space, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until December 7, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free
Tel: 8459 9663

Movie

The Lives of Others (2006)

In 1984 East Berlin, Gerd Wiesler conducts surveillance on playwright Georg Dremann and his girlfriend. Unexpectedly, Wiesler finds his life changing as he immerses himself in his targets' lives.

Where: China Film Archive, 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitians, Haidian District

When: 7 pm

Admission: 20 yuan
Tel: 8229 6153

Nightlife Peggy Hsu

Taiwanese independent singer-songwriter creates a whimsical world in her album released earlier this year, *Le Cirque*, with five romantic new songs in a range of styles from folk to jazz.

Where: Mao Livehouse, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 8:30 pm
Admission: 120 yuan advance purchase, 150 yuan at the door
Tel: 6402 5080



6

Saturday, November 13

Exhibition I'm on the Road to ...

This exhibition presents six young artists' works, showing their confusion about complex human relationships in a modern consumerism society.

Where: Mizuma and One Gallery, 241 Caochangdi Village, Chaoyang District

When: Until December 26, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 5127 3267

Movie Letters to Father Jacob (2009)

This film from Finland is the story of Leila, a life-sentence prisoner who has been pardoned and offered a job as an assistant to the blind pastor Jacob.

Where: Broadway Cinematheque, 2/F Building 4, north section of Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 4 pm
Admission: 20 yuan
Tel: 8438 8258 ext. 8008

Nightlife Liquid Oxygen Can

The local hardcore and new-metal band redefines percussion in their music, employing big Chinese drums, empty petrol barrels and beer gauges.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiadaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: 9 pm
Admission: 60 yuan advance purchase, 70 yuan at the door
Tel: 6401 4611

Sunday, November 14

Exhibition Chinese Toy Stories – Laurens Tan Solo Exhibition

This sculpture exhibition by Laurens Tan has an innocence and sense of play in its constructive observation of China's cultural drift in amid globalization.

Where: Red Gate Gallery, Dongbianmen Watchtower, Chongwenmen, Dongcheng District

When: Until December 31, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free
Tel: 6525 1005

Nightlife Wutiaoren

The Guangdong folk band sings in Hoklo dialect about the innuendos of modern life and times.

Where: D-22, 242 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District
When: 9 pm
Admission: 40 yuan; 50

When: Until December 31, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm
Admission: 20 yuan for students
Tel: 6265 3177

Movie



Killing Girls (2009)

This documentary tells the

truth about abortion in Russia. The filmmakers follow the main characters when they enter the clinic and stay with them when they leave. It is a story about morality and economic choices in today's Russian society.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
When: 7 pm
Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students
Tel: 8459 9269

Upcoming

Nightlife

The Raveonettes

The Danish alternative rock duo's music is characterized by two-part vocal harmonies accompanied by a hard-edged electric guitar.

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhang-

When: November 16, 9 pm

Admission: 180 yuan advance

purchase, 260 yuan at the door

Tel: 6404 2711

Stage in December

Concert

Fou Ts'ong Piano Recital

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: December 4, 7:30 pm

Admission: 100-600 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Maksim Mrvica Piano Recital

Where: Beijing Exhibition Center Theater, 135 Xizhimen Wai Dajie, Xicheng District

When: December 4, 7:30 pm

Admission: 100-1,500 yuan

Tel: 5129 7260

Wolfram Schmitt-Leonard Piano Recital

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 18 Zhaodengyu Lu, Xicheng District

When: December 12, 7:30 pm

Admission: 30-380 yuan

Tel: 6417 7845

New Year Concert by Wiener Johann Strauss Walzer Orchester

Where: Center Theater, 40 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: December 29-30, 7:30 pm

Admission: 180-880 yuan

Tel: 6462 8470

Dance

Swan Lake

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: December 9-12, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-680 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Drama

Jane Eyre

Where: Theater Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: December 9-23, 7:30 pm

Admission: 180-580 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Grand Expectations

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: December 16-19, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-880 yuan

Tel: 6551 8058

Opera

Farewell to Cambridge

Where: Multi-functional Theater of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: December 15-19, 7:30 pm

Admission: 200-320 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

(By He Jianwei)

Don't let stomach pain stop you

What are stomach spasms?

Linda Chen felt anxious as she waited for her clients to approve a new business proposal. That anxiety turned into abdominal spasms with a twinge of pain — a discomfort that kept her from performing her best during the meeting.

The sudden pain was not without precedent. Only weeks before, after attending a friend's dinner party, she began to feel a painful churning in her stomach.

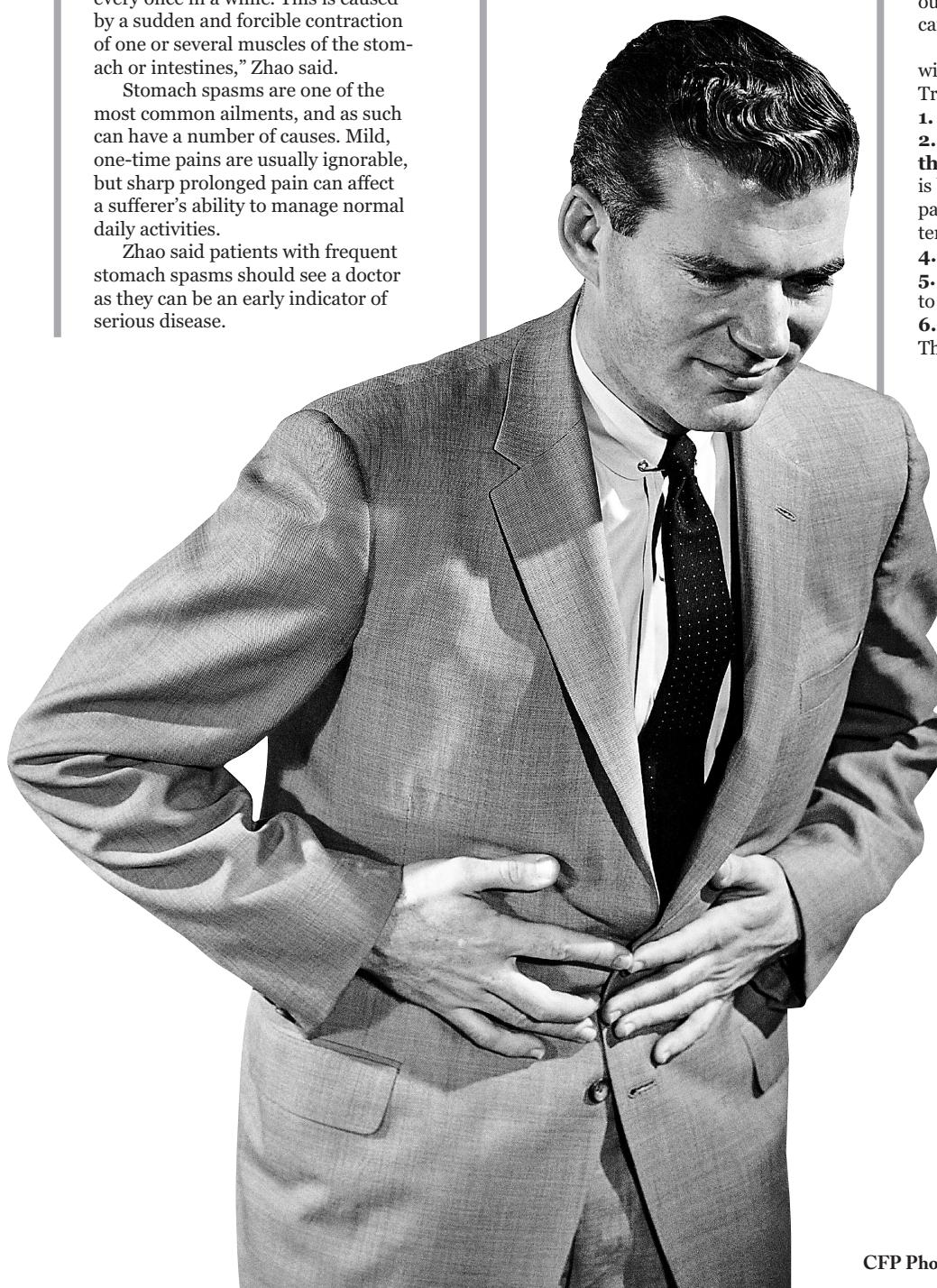
Chen decided to see Zhao Guiying, a doctor in the gastrointestinal department of Beijing Boai Hospital. Zhao told Linda she was experiencing stomach spasms caused by stress and overeating.

"Stomach spasms are usually a painful squeezing sensation that comes and goes over a span of minutes. They crescendo up and then ebb away," Zhao said.

"Many people get stomach spasms every once in a while. This is caused by a sudden and forcible contraction of one or several muscles of the stomach or intestines," Zhao said.

Stomach spasms are one of the most common ailments, and as such can have a number of causes. Mild, one-time pains are usually ignorable, but sharp prolonged pain can affect a sufferer's ability to manage normal daily activities.

Zhao said patients with frequent stomach spasms should see a doctor as they can be an early indicator of serious disease.



By Han Manman

Many people have stomach spasms that range from uncomfortable to debilitating, but few people who have stomach pains are willing to see a doctor before they have a serious attack of pain.

Doctors say people who suffer the problem can usually reduce their symptoms with changes in diet and lifestyle. But if the pain persists or worsens, an evaluation by a medical doctor is necessary to avoid serious complications.

If you are a person who frequently deals with stomach spasms, this story will provide some simple ways for you to make a self-diagnosis and ease the pain by yourself.

Causes of spasms

Serious underlying conditions can occasionally be the cause of stomach spasms. The following are the most common serious and non-serious causes:

1. Overeating and indigestion. If you eat too much or overindulge in a particular food, you may have spasms. Food needs time and room to digest properly. Overindulgence often causes indigestion and hyperacidity. Too many alcoholic beverages can cause a similar effect.

2. Anxiety and stress. Many stomach spasms are due to anxiety

and stress.

3. Food intolerance: A common culprit is lactose. Some people may also be sensitive to raw or processed foods.

4. Food poisoning. One of the top causes of stomach spasms are bacteria and viruses. These are easy to catch if you eat at unsanitary places or don't wash and cook food thoroughly. Harmful microorganisms can cause diarrhea and constipation.

5. Menstruation. Menstrual activity is also a common cause of stomach spasms in women, especially

those with irregular cycles, premenstrual syndrome or menopause.

6. Abdominal muscle pain. Weak abdominal muscles often experience spasms during exercise. The spasms go away in time as the muscles strengthen, but a mild spasm usually means you're targeting the right abdominal muscles.

7. Internal infection and bleeding. Serious problems like infection and bleeding may manifest as stomach spasms. Some medicines may also cause stomach spasms as a side effect.

Self-help and pain relief

Like any mild ailment, stomach spasms may be a sign of more serious illness. Avoid letting yourself become dehydrated if your spasms cause vomiting.

If you cannot bear the stabbing pains or the spasms persist along with uncontrollable diarrhea or vomiting, you will need to see a doctor. Try the following to manage less serious attacks:

- 1. Lie down or sit comfortably.** Try to relax and breathe.
- 2. Take your mind off the pain by keeping busy with something.** Watch your favorite show or movie or listen to some music. This is believed to be safer because it cools down over time, unlike heating pads that stay hot and might burn your skin if you fall asleep. The warm temperature can relax muscles and relieve pain.
- 4. Take an over-the-counter pain medication.**
- 5. Pamper yourself with a warm bath.** Light some scented candles to create a soothing environment.
- 6. If you feel like defecating or releasing gas, don't hold it in.** This will help to ease the pain.

Prevention tips

Common stomach spasms can easily be avoided and controlled if you know what triggers your symptom. The following simple tips can help with prevention:

- 1. Eat your food properly.** Avoid any foods that cause you serious pain.
- 2. Do not gorge.** Stomachs are very sensitive to overeating. Try eating smaller and more frequent meals throughout the day. Also make sure that you are properly chewing your food. Doctors recommend chewing slowly and not washing your food down with a beverage.
- 3. Avoid eating when upset.** Anxiety and eating do not go well together. If you eat under tension, the blood supply to your stomach is reduced and food becomes hard to digest.
- 4. Choose non-caffeinated drinks.** Coffee and colas worsen stomach tension. Opt for water, fruit juice or herbal teas.
- 5. Minimize the intake of cold fluids.** When you gulp down any icy cold drink very rapidly, your stomach may have temporary but painful spasms.
- 6. Increase your intake of fiber.** Research has shown that eating two high-fiber cookies each day will halve your chance of stomach spasms. Fiber helps move food quickly through the digestive system.
- 7. Let your stomach relax.** Take a break of half-hour or more after a big meal before doing any heavy duty activities. Exercise diverts the blood from the digestive system to the arms and legs thereby increasing the chances of intestinal cramps.
- 8. Go for a light walk.** If you have had a sumptuous meal and are feeling full, take a light walk. Light exercise — especially walking — has been shown to increase the rate at which digested foods move through the bowels.

CFP Photo

The best villages in and around Beijing

By Zhao Hongyi

After seven months of online and paper voting, the Beijing Municipal Rural Working Committee and Municipal Tourism Bureau released their list of the "Top 10 Most Beautiful Villages in Beijing." Amusingly – and unlike the last four years – 13 villages made this year's list.

Thirty-one villages were up for vote. Criteria included productivity, cultural uniqueness, infrastructure and availability of public services. The bureaus expect the evaluation process to help the villages further develop and become models of rural sustainability.

The annual selection of Beijing's

best villages began in 2006. Fifty-three different villages have been honored in the last five years, such as Cuandixia for its ancient structures and Panggezhuang for its watermelons.

The organizers are planning to publish a set of books introducing the villages and a map identifying where they are located. They are also inviting the public to submit a logo design and theme song, and to nominate ambassadors and suggest souvenirs. Interested individuals can visit beijing.cn for more information and sign up.

Below are 10 of the 13 best villages introductions.



It's a pleasant tour to the remote mountain villages around Beijing during the spring and autumn.

CFP Photo

Jiuyuan Village – famous ancient roads



Ancient roads are the name card of the village.



Farmer's banquet

At one time in history, Jiuyuan was famous for its leeks. Today, its flowers and fruits attract visitors year-round. In the trees in the surrounding mountains, one can find Chinese toon trees, cherries, pears and walnuts. Ancient ore-mining caves have become bars full of oxygen, which is precious in downtown Beijing. A stream runs through nearly every house, with trees and flowers planted in the front and back yards. Ma Zhiyuan, a famous poet during the Yuan Dynasty (1206-1368), used to live here. Watchtowers and natural karst caves enrich the village with culture and history.

Tel: 6185 9464

Where: Wangping Town, Mentougou District

Getting there: Take Subway Line 1 to Pingguoyuan Station, then transfer to Bus 929 to the village.

Hegezhuang Village – exotic foreign culture and atmosphere

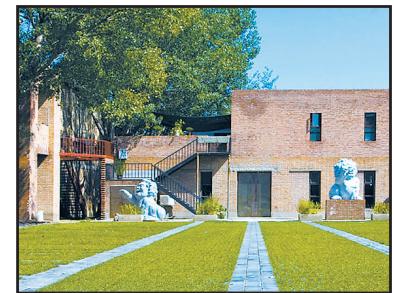
The houses here were built using a singular design, but villagers have decorated their homes in unique and colorful styles. Nearly every courtyard here is decorated in some exotic fashion, attracting many expat renters. Places such as the No. 1 Art Garden and Fruits Garden Restaurant give

this place an international and creative feel. This is a great destination for cultural tourism.

Tel: 15901403239

Where: Cuigezhuang Town, Chaoyang District

Getting there: Take Bus 944 to the stop of the village.



Residential houses and public houses decorated to appeal to foreign tastes.

Nanguan Village – scenic mountains and streams

Nanguan is famous for its beautiful mountains, springs and rivers. The carefully designed and decorated streets and residential houses, together with the mountain springs and streams, make the village appear idyllic on a good day. Longtan Spring in the center of the village has provided water for thousands of years. Locals have turned the village into a tourist destination, with places to fish, dine and pick fruits.

Tel: 6038 5465

Where: Qinglonghu Town, Fangshan District

Getting there: Take a train toward Taiyuan, Shanxi Province and get off at the stop of the village; or take Bus 901 at Dongzhimen Long-Distance Bus Station and get off at the stop of the village.



Beautiful scene in Nanguan Village



Paintings depicting legendary stories on the walls.

Liuminying Village – eco-friendly agricultural village



Use of marsh gas is common.



"Jiaozi Banquet" has a long history here.

Liuminying is famous for its "eco-friendly agriculture," which includes the use of marsh gas and organic vegetables, and its recycling program. The village has already won medals such as the "Global Top 500 Environment Protection Award" and "World's Organic Cultivation Award" from international organizations, and is recognized as the foremost eco-friendly village in China. It is known for its eco-tourism – visitors are encouraged to partake in the "jiaozi (dumpling) banquet," which has been

around for more than 3,000 years.

Tel: 8025 6005

Where: Changziying Town, Daxing District

Getting there: Take Bus 926-zhi at the Long Distance Bus Station in Yongdingmen, Bus 32 in Yizhuang Development Zone or Bus 19 from Daxing Long Distance Bus Station to the stop of the village.

Photos provided by www.beijing.cn

Continued on page 21...

...continued from page 20

Yuejiaying Village – agriculture and horticulture

A finely built and decorated village, with trees, flowers, clean streets and lanes. Yuejiazhuang is famous for its organic agriculture and horticulture, modeled after cities like Beijing and Shenzhen. The village often uses solar energy and energy-saving walls in construction, and has developed a sophisticated recycling system. The key to its success is it takes a broad view and, once committing itself to a project, goes about executing it with all its resources.

Tel: 13601395180
Where: Dayushu Town, Yanqing County

Getting there: Take Bus 919 at Dongzhimen to Dongxinyuan, walk 500 meters west.



Sophisticated horticulture



Villagers in their library

Caojialu Village – in the mountains of Hebei



Restaurants open for business.

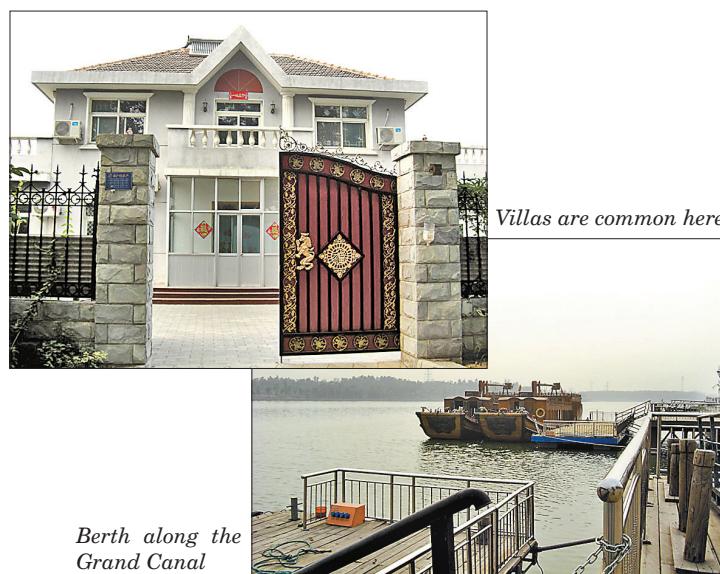


Village yards

Caojialu in Hebei Province was historically isolated from other villages in the region by treacherous mountains, but it has since developed into a tourist destination (modern agricultural production is its other big economy). Caojialu offers flowers along its rivers and the beautiful scenery of Wuling Mountain.

Tel: 8102 2403
Where: Xin Chengzi Town, Miyun County
Getting there: Take Bus 970 or 980 at Dongzhimen to Miyun Bus Station. Then take a bus to Dajiaoyu (5 yuan) or shuttle bus (10 yuan) to Caojialu Village.

Daying Village – a village of villas and yards



Berth along the Grand Canal

At the east end of Chang'an Jie is a village bordered by the Grand Canal, Chaobei River and Yunchao River. The village started developing its eco-tourism in 1998, with 170 families rebuilding their homes into villas. Fifty-three families have open-yard restaurants and provide

Villas are common here.

accommodation for tourists.

Tel: 8958 0181
Where: Lucheng Town, Tongzhou District
Getting there: Take Bus 938 at Beijing Railway Station, or Bus 8 to Tongzhou, get off at the stop of the village.

Laoquankou Village – mountains and clean spring water

This village was established during Emperor Jiaqing's reign during the Qing Dynasty (1616-1911). The mountains west of the village have many springs that have been providing water for hundreds of years. Every house is well designed and decorated, with front yards used for vegetables and backyards for nut trees. Fruit-bearing trees and flowers are commonly seen along the roads in the village, which is developing eco-friendly agriculture, horticulture and tourism.

Tel: 6196 1334
Where: Xiong'erzhai Town, Pinggu District
Getting there: Take Bus 918 at Dongzhimen to Changguanlou, then take local Bus 12 north for another 15 kilometers.



Special dishes prepared by villagers



Bird's-eye view of the mountainous village

Gaolizhang Village – eco-village inside forest



Central plaza in the village



Entrance to the village

At the crossroads of Beiqing Road and North Sixth Ring Road is a small village covered by a large forest. Visitors to Gaolizhang can take an ecological tour into the surrounding trees. The east of the village opens to Beiqing Road, which has become a diamond-shaped residential area full of ecological agriculture, facilities and concepts.

Tel: 13581552733
Where: Spring Town, Haidian District
Getting there: Take Bus 330 at the east gate of the Summer Palace, get off at the stop of the village.

Dajing Village – village in modern business style

Located at the southwest corner of Fourth Ring Road, this village has been an important vegetable supplier to Beijing for decades. In 2000, the village was divided by a green belt, with villagers' houses in the south and tourist attractions in the north. The village contains business hotels, restaurants and golf clubs, and was built with the principles of green industry and green services.

Tel: 6384 7556
Where: Lugouqiao Town, Fengtai District
Getting there: Take Bus 301, 309, 338, 390, 452, 693, 973 to the village.



Business hotels



Golf driving range

Photos provided by www.beijing.cn

Dining



The Festive Spread

This holiday season, Grand Millennium Beijing is taking things up a notch. Its stunning outlets will host a range of Christmas and New Year programs guaranteed to make guests merry. Indulge in an amazing buffet spread of Christmas delights like roast turkey, honey-baked ham and brandy fruitcake.

Where: CBD International Cuisine, Grand Millennium Beijing, 7 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

When: December 13-30

Cost: 166 yuan lunch, 226 yuan dinner (15 percent gratuity)

Tel: 8587 6888

Aromas and flavors of Burgundy

Come for a unique dining experience at Justine's restaurant where guest chef Guy Rebsamen from Burgundy will be preparing authentic French dishes.

Rebsamen owns Chez Guy and Family, a restaurant tourist pillar of the Gevrey-Chambertin. His subtle alliance between contemporary cuisine and traditional Burgundy style wins the favor of every diner.

Where: Jianguo Hotel Beijing, 5 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: November 18-28

Tel: 6500 2233 ext. 8039



Indian Light Festival

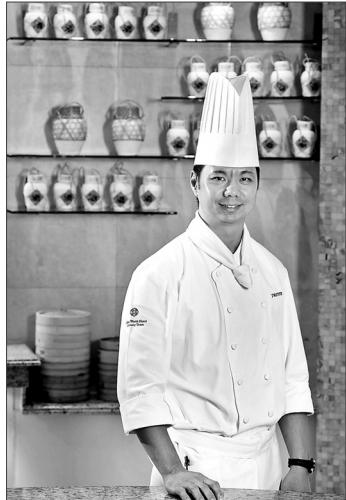
Royal Boat Traditional India is celebrating its first Indian Light Festival, a time of harmony and togetherness with friends and family. Buy any tea, juice or Indian Lassi and get one free.

Royal Boat is a popular meeting place where people can sip and enjoy either a cup or a pot of Indian Tea, taste the vibrant typical Indian drinks and fresh fruit juice prepared on the fly. Its tea is made from Assam and Darjeeling premium and high-grade CTC and leaf teas sourced in India.

Where: Royal Boat, B1-202, Tower B, Sanlitun SOHO, Chaoyang District

Tel: 5935 9463

Hotel



China World Hotel gets new head chef

Scene a Cafe, the all-day dining restaurant at China World Hotel Beijing, welcomes its new head chef Justin Kam. Kam is Malaysian and has more than 20 years of experience in fine restaurants. He is an expert of international cuisine and vegetable and ice sculpture. Prior to moving to China, Kam was a high-ranking chef at a leading five-star hotel in Kuala Lumpur. He also worked with some of Malaysia's most highly acclaimed resorts, including Sunway Lagoon Resort Hotel and Park Royal Penang Resort.

Marco Polo winter saver

Book the "Marco Polo Winter Saver" and

stay with Marco Polo Parkside Beijing to enjoy the best available rates: deluxe room to continental club floor room accommodation, buffet breakfast for two, Internet access, early check-in at noon, a 4 pm check out, complimentary room upgrade and your choice of pillows.

Where: Marco Polo Parkside Beijing, 78 Anli Lu, Chaoyang District

When: November 1 — February 28, 2011

Tel: 5963 6500



Christmas dreams

The Hilton Christmas Train pulls into Beijing December 4 to turn the Hilton Beijing into a winter wonderland. Michael Nagel, general manager, started the brand's first Christmas Train project while he was stationed in Seoul, Korea. Since then, the Hilton Christmas Train has become a strong tradition held in collaboration with other corporations to raise funds for charities. Join in to spread good will and winter merriment to the less fortunate. The train display coincides with Hilton Beijing's Christmas tree lighting ceremony.

Aviation



Jetstar starts Singapore-Guilin flights

Low-fare leader Jetstar is the first carrier to fly direct between Singapore and Guilin. The new direct flights between Singapore and Guilin will serve tourists from Singapore, Australia and other Asian and European countries connecting through the Singapore hub.

Event

Round Table Knights

Some artists have a natural charisma or aura: Round Table Knights is one of them. Their 10-year journey from a small Swiss province to the top of the contemporary dance music scene has been epic. This Christmas Eve, Punk will be welcoming the disc-jockey team to spin the best house sets of 2009 and 2010 on December 24.

Where: The Opposite House, Building 1, 11 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

When: December 24

Cost: 50 yuan at the door after 11 pm, free before 11 pm

Tel: 6417 6688

Revelry and celebration at Raffles

There are many reasons to rejoice and celebrate the season at Raffles Beijing. The restaurant is reviving the nostalgic era of Charleston tunes and flapper girls of 1920s for the party of a lifetime this Christmas. Enjoy a six-course gourmet dinner with free French champagne and wines.

Where: Raffles Beijing Hotel, 33 Dong Chang'an Jie, Dongcheng District

When: December 24, 6:30 pm onwards

Cost: 998 yuan

Tel: 6526 3388

Tourism

Mauritius awarded as top destination

The island nation of Mauritius was named the World's Leading Island Destination at the World Travel Awards Grand Final 2010 Ceremony on November 7 at London's Grosvenor House hotel. The awards, called "The Oscars of the travel industry" by the *Wall Street Journal*, recognize excellence in world travel and tourism. Mauritius beat competitors including Bali (Indonesia), Barbados, the Cook Islands, Jamaica, Maldives and Seychelles.

(By Sun Feng)

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

Chillin' on the touchy bus

By Wang Yu

You have to be patient when learning a foreign language – read more, practice more and never be afraid of misunderstanding. But a lot of my Western friends have informed me that many Chinese people, especially girls, are afraid to speak English in front of foreigners. That's not conducive to their language development.

I must agree. However, on the other hand, it's funny to encounter someone who thinks he knows a bit too much, and always wants to show off.

On my way to the office the other day, I heard a couple on a particularly crowded bus. I was standing next to an elderly lady who was sleeping, and behind me was the young couple.

Judging by their accent, I think they were from the south, and they were talking about "traditional Beijing English accent."

The girl was trying to teach her boyfriend a single word: "touch." She insisted that the word should be pronounced "touchy." It was quite strange listening to the two of them say that word again and again on the bus.

"People here don't speak English the right way. You should learn from foreigners or people who used to live abroad like me," the young woman said.

I doubt native speakers pronounce "touch" the way she does. Eventually the bus stopped, I got off, and the world was once again sane.

Thinking back, I admire the young woman's confidence. It reminds me of Jenny Ma, a friend of mine who has a style and bravado all her own.

I met Jenny, an ex-PR manager, at a party last winter. It was a conventional party with lots of strangers and boring music, but I couldn't help noticing Jenny shuttling back and forth, talking with everyone like they were



good friends. We had only talked on the phone or online before, and it was good to finally meet face-to-face.

We were eventually joined by Michael, a reporter for several American publications.

"Hi Michael, how are you?" Jenny greeted.

"Just chillin'. How's work?"

"Well, quite busy. Good to see you. What can I get for you? Beer or cocktail?"

"I prefer a vodka, thanks."

"No problem, a vodka makes you feel warm. Do you feel OK now?"

"Yeah ... I'm always OK. Why do you ask?"

"You said that you are chilling ..."

"Chillin'" is a typical American slang that means "I'm not doing anything in particular."

When informed, Jenny laughed, not in the least embarrassed. I bet she'll even talk to a stranger about it.

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

The Visitors Export

By Terry Boyd-Zhang

Sometimes there can be a visitor that you would like to export. Maybe it's your sister, your best friend or your mother-in-law. And though you love them very much, you would just as well be happy to have your own space and your own perceived freedom back.

We have a saying in English: "Visitors, like fish, start to stink after three days." So, we don't usually like to live with someone for extended periods of time, like they do in ancient times.

It would be something to go to your local post office, to the "Visitors Export" counter, and say, "Um, yeah. I got these relatives staying with me from Canada. Well, like, we've done the Wall, the Summer Palace, and Forbidden City, and, you know, they're a whiny bunch of buggers. I'm so sick of babysitting them around Beijing and they are just becoming a pain in the ol' behind. I'd like to



send them back pronto."

The grumpy postal worker would glare at you for a bit, demand to see your passport, and send you around to three different counters before providing you with a regulation-sized box, overcharging you on postage and then, voila! Visitor problem solved!

For all of you who are nodding knowingly, Beijing post offices do not

yet have such a counter. But, given China's rapid development, I'd say it isn't far in the future. *Guanzhong* does mean "visitor" or "audience" and the last two characters, *chukou*, should look familiar because they mean "exit." So, *Visitors Exit* is a more exact translation.

It's a shame, really, because you are stuck with those annoying visitors. Sorry about that.

Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multi-national company, then watch out for this page each week

1. What's special about this rug is it's made using vegetable dye instead of chemical dye.

Professor Zhu Shida (ZS): Though this is grammatically all right, it is erratic in rhetoric. The idea is so twisted and redundant. We shall try to cut all those unnecessary words and make it terse. The main idea is that it is special and it is dyed with a vegetable dye. She needs to stress these two points. How about it if we say it this way: What's special about this rug is its use of vegetable dye instead of chemical dye. Is it terser? I have another example of a redundant sentence: The gate tower without the arrow tower cannot help but be awkward. We just try to trim this sentence: The gate tower without the arrow tower can only be awkward. There is still another example: The sun becomes brighter; the snow becomes whiter; the walls become redder; the tiles become yellower. We can trim it into a much better and terser structure: The sun becomes brighter; the snow whiter; the walls redder; the tiles yellower. Is it better? One of the principles in writing is to say things straight as much as possible.

Terry Boyd-Zhang (TBZ): Yes, while the IELTS, on one hand, looks for sentence complexity, on the other hand, English is a very terse language, especially compared with Chinese. A dedicated student of writing must read Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style*, the "bible" of English writing. Don't be scared – the book is only about 70 pages and every extra word cut out, just like Professor Zhu has advised.

2. Waits to get into pavilions like Japan, the US and the UK would be as long as four hours.

ZS: This is another rhetorical problem. In oral English, it is all right. As a matter of fact, "wait" can be used as a noun, for instance, A four-hour wait, a long wait in line; I don't like these long waits. However, for standard English writing, it is not perfect. Let's see if we can make it a little better. By using the pattern of "It takes ... to," we may say: It took four hours to get into pavilions like Japan, the US and the UK. Or we may say: One had to wait for four hours before he could get into the pavilions like Japan, the US and the UK. I think the tone and the rhetorical style would be proper for a serious essay.

TBZ: Learning the difference between spoken English and academic English is a real problem. How to do it? Read outside the box – pick up academic books which interest you and wade your way through them. The vocabulary you learn in the latest Hollywood flick may not be appropriate in many situations in a school setting, so you'll have to put in some hard work, too.

3. The sea burial fees will be waved by the government.

ZS: This mistake is similar to the "towing" vs. "toeing" distinction we made in last week's column. The writer is unconsciously fooled by the pronunciation of the word. As we know, in this case it should be "waived" instead of "waved." To waive means to give up (a privilege, right or claim); do without; relinquish: He is glad to waive the distinctions of rank. It may also mean to decline to avail oneself of (an advantage): The lawyer waived the privilege of cross-examining the witness. It also means to put aside; to defer: I waived the discussion today. You see that the sample sentence should be: The sea burial fees will be waived by the government. So, you have to always be on guard about words that have similar pronunciations and be not confused by them.

TBZ: Witch government? Eye also wont to be berried that whey! Yes, wee have quiet a few homonyms inn English, end many other words with easily-confused spelling. Poor students!



Movie of the week

What kind of life does an agent have after leaving the CIA? *Red*, adapted from the popular D.C. Comics graphic novels by Warren Ellis and Cully Hamner, attempts an answer.

Bruce Willis, Morgan Freeman, John Malkovich and Helen Mirren star as agents retired from the CIA, MI6 and the KGB. Though they want to live peacefully, their past has other plans.

Unlike other action movies, *Red* offers a refreshing sense of humor. The story makes sport of its ex-Cold War killers in their fight for normalcy.

Synopsis

Former CIA agent Frank Moses falls in love with Sarah, a travel agency operator he meets over the phone. But before he can meet the girl, his old employers send killers to bury the truth of a military mission that he took part in during the '80s.

Having saved Sarah, Frank tracks down his old colleagues Marvin, Joe and Victoria, to enlist their help. This time, the agents have to fight not for their country but for their right to retirement.

Scene 1

(Frank talks with Sarah, the operator of a travel agency. They have been phone friends for a long time.)

F: You start that new book?

S: I did.

F: And, what's it called?

S: Uh, it's called, Love's Savage Secret.

F: Oh, my God! Is it any good?

S: It's terrible, I love it. It's awful. It's about this fashion designer and his super model girlfriend and they **get recruited** (1) by the CIA to stop an assassination at the Milan, spring shows.

F: Well, who doesn't like Milan in the spring?

S: I guess. Anyway, I gotta do something for excitement. My landlady keeps trying to set me up with her bridge partner's kid. She just told me she thinks I'm gay.

F: I try not to judge.

S: Shut up! I'm not gay.

F: So here's something weird ... I'm actually going to be in Kansas City next week.

S: In person (2)? That could be a bad idea.

F: It could be ...

S: Why don't you call me when you get to town?

Scene 2

(Frank plans to break into the CIA headquarters. He comes to Ican Simanov, an old nemesis, for help.)

I: I have to say, this is the last thing I expected when I got up this morning. I have many times dreamed of killing you. But now you are, retired for a few years now.

Time passes. As we get older, things seem less important. Still I owe you for killing, Igor.

F: Igor the Butcher?

I: He was a great asset.

F: He was a pig.

I: He was my cousin.

F: I'm sorry.

(Ivan toasts.)

I: To Igor, the butcher.

F: He's not dead. I flipped (3) him. He owns a chain of 7-11s in Orange County. He weighs 500 pounds.

(Ivan laughs.)

I: Drink.

F: Who are we drinking to now?

I: Veronique. She was mine.

F: Impossible.

I: Yes.

F: Whatever she got, it was worth it.

I: I miss the old days. I haven't killed anyone, in years.

F: That's sad.

I: But, I think you are not here for the vodka.

F: I'm going to break into the CIA. I need your complete security layout of Langley. Cracks, Codes, ID swipes ... All of it.

I: A favor from Frank Moses ...

Scene 3

(Frank, Joe, Sarah and Marvin go to their old colleague Victoria's.)

V: You were lucky.

F: How'd you do it?

V: What?

F: How did you make the transition? You seem so calm, at ease ...

V: I love it. I love it here. I love the baking I love the flowering arranging, I like ... I like the routine.

I do get a bit restless sometimes. I take the old contract on the side (4). I ... I just can't stop.

F: Oh yeah ... Tell me about it.

V: You can't just flip a switch and become someone else. So ... tell me about your lady friend.

F: She makes me think that I could actually ... have a life.

Vocabulary

1. **get recruited**: to be hired

2. **in person**: personally

3. **flip**: to let go

4. **on the side**: in addition to one's main occupation

(Wang Yu)